



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Dear Church Family,

I always find this time of year filled with excitement and anticipation. We have had quite a robust summer season in the life of our church, with a significant increase in worship participation. I credit much of that early summer engagement to Lindsey Daly, Sarah Haddad, and their team for offering our children six additional weeks of church school. What a delight it was to have so many of our young people with us this summer. Additionally, the Deacons, who quite literally do much of the heavy lifting of the summer [there has been even more worship set-up due to increased attendance, enhanced AV technology, and the need to offer more shade], create such a wonderful environment for worship in our memorial garden. While it has been a remarkable summer season in many ways, as we edge toward the launch of our new program year, I find, as always, I am looking forward to seeing our entire congregation back together again on God's Acre.

The first signs of that return have been the Vacation Bible School program for our kids offered this past week. It has been amazing to see all the children involved in this program as both participants and leaders. Seeing what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of our young people and witnessing the deep commitment of our older youth and young adult leaders to our children fills my heart with gratitude for our church and our Lord! These last few years, the timing of VBS has been such that it helps to build engagement and excitement for the upcoming children and youth programs.

Of course, the most significant development in the lead-up to Kickoff Sunday has been the addition to our church staff and family of Nerva Altino, our new Director of Music Ministries. It has been an absolute delight to get to know Nerva, and he has



been such a welcomed addition to our staff. Nerva's talent, humility, faithfulness, and good cheer are evident upon first meeting him, and I trust you all will enjoy getting to know him in the weeks to come! I also feel so grateful to the Search Team that helped find Nerva and brought him to us: Diane Bailey [Personnel], Erik Burns, Lonnie deMarco [Personnel], Tammie Garner, David Haddad, Tereza Nemessanyi, Sarah Owen, Allie Stinchcomb, and Nancy Upton. This is a new and exciting day in our Music Ministries, and it is a wonderful time to consider joining any of our choirs or music ministry teams. If you have ever considered participating in our music program, please reach out to Nerva to see how you might become involved.

In anticipation of this exciting moment, and in an effort to further support the music ministries of the church, the Deacons and Trustees have formed a Music Committee that will oversee, with Nerva's guidance, all programmatic and budgetary aspects of our Children, Youth, and Adult music offerings.

*Continued on page three*

## Artist Profile: Darryl Abraham



This year, our illustrations have been created by artist Darryl Abraham from Naples, New York. Abraham painted much of the area and its people during his time at the American International School in Israel. Our image this month evokes The Feeding of the 5000.

### Biography

Darryl Abraham and his art are well known in the community of Naples, New York. His sculptures and drawings of farmhouses, stores, boats, and landscapes celebrate the history of the Finger Lakes region, and his artwork can be found on store signs and murals throughout the town. Abraham has taught at many colleges and universities around New York state, including as an adjunct instructor at Mansfield University, Cazenovia College, Wells College and Finger Lakes Community College; as well as most recently taking a visiting artist position at the American International School in Israel.

He also ran a landscape business for several years, carrying on a family tradition of nurturing the land as encouraged by his parents, Doc & Katy Abraham, well-known for their nationally syndicated radio show, The Green Thumb. Since retiring, Darryl now concentrates full time on his art.



*Continued from page one*

Nancy Upton will chair this team, supported by two additional members of the Music Search Team, David Haddad and Tammie Garner. From Adult Music Ministries, we have Lyn Chivvis [MMT], Michael Elliott [Bell Choir], and William Picard [Chancel Choir]. Mark Tedford will join with a focus on our virtual music offerings through live streams and podcasts, Anne Emson will represent Children's Music, Grant Carlson and Caroline Haddad will be the voices for Youth Music. This is a great team of well-known church leaders, and they are honored to serve as the inaugural slate of nominees.

There are four agenda items we hope this committee will tend to:

1. Onboard Nerva and serve as a support and sounding board for him.
2. Interpret the Music Survey and decide how best to respond.
3. Harmonize all music programs with one another and bring them into a shared leadership structure.
4. Further define and refine the mission of this new Committee.

As you can tell, this has been a very active time in our music ministries, and, as always, I am both awed and deeply grateful for all the support our church members have offered throughout this entire process. As always, please feel free to reach out to our Nominating and Governance team if you feel called to serve on this team in the future.

I look forward to seeing you all for Kickoff Sunday on, September 8! That will be the day we return to our normal program year worship times: 8:00am in the Chapel and 10:00am in the Meeting House. We have an exciting year planned and the momentum of our church life continues to be strong. I look forward to how the Holy Spirit will inspire us and lead us in the year to come!

Yours in Christ,  
Chapin

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

## September Plate Collection

Our plate collection for the month is Inspirica. Inspirica is one of the largest providers of services to the homeless and those facing housing insecurity in Connecticut, and the largest in lower Fairfield County. Each night, they house approximately 475 people, and each year, they serve more than 3,000 people. They operate 12 facilities in lower Fairfield County and provide an extensive array of support services, including vocational training, workforce education, job placement, housing placement, job & housing retention support, early childhood & parenting services, children's services, counseling, case management, and much more. Inspirica is one of only a handful of organizations in the nation that address the physical components of homelessness and housing insecurity and the underlying root causes on a single, powerful end-to-end platform. You can help them in this effort by contributing to the plate offering on September Sundays and by participating in the Sneaker Tree Project. Thank you!



## Church School Registration and Kickoff Sunday!

Church school registration is now open! Please be sure you enroll your child for the 2024-25 Church School year (in conjunction with any of our Youth programming and Children's Music offerings!) using the email link and form sent to you. Classroom options for infants through 7th grade will be waiting to welcome all children on Sunday, September 8. Come reconnect with old friends and teachers and meet new ones! Stay after church for fun, food, fellowship, games, and activities.

Finally, be sure to visit the "Sneaker Tree" following the service for an opportunity to purchase a pair of new kicks for a kid in need! This is a wonderful family-friendly outreach opportunity!

We can't wait to see you and kick off another church year.



## Inspirica Sneaker Tree



Back to school means pencils, pens, and new school sneakers! New sneakers in the right size, such a given for most of us, are an incredible gift for a homeless child. Take a sneaker from the tree on Kickoff Sunday to sign up and buy for your chosen child. Sneakers may be returned to the box in Smith Hall or mailed directly to Tracy Goldman. Contact Tracy Goldman at [office@godsacre.org](mailto:office@godsacre.org).



## All-Church Fellowship Brunch

Join us for the All-Church Fellowship Brunch on Sunday, September 8, following the 10:00am worship service. There will be plenty of food and fellowship for all to enjoy! Check your email for ways to contribute, or contact Laurel Carr at [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org).



## Holy Smokes Fellowship BBQ

The Garners and the Fellowship Ministry Team invite you to a classic Memphis BBQ with all the fixings on Saturday, September 28, from 6:00 to 9:00pm. Enjoy a fabulous meal, seasonal brew tasting, and s'mores by the firepit as you reunite with church friends or make new ones! This adult social is one to mark on your fall calendar!

The cost is \$30 per person. Please bring your favorite beverage to share. RSVP by Sunday, September 22, using the QR code below or contact Laurel Carr at [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org).



## MEN'S GROUP

### Ways To Get Involved

#### 2024 - 2025 Men's Group Launch

The Men of the Congregational Church of New Canaan are blessed to have many ways to walk together and support each other throughout the year. All adult men are encouraged to find a way to get involved. Broad MG events planned for the year include traditional gatherings such as the Christmas Dinner, Pivot Breakfast, and Year End BBQ in June. Join us for an introductory Men's Small Group (MSG) meeting is planned for Monday, September 30, at 7:30pm (pizza and salad included), where we will kick off our monthly gatherings. Monthly M4 breakfast gatherings discussing work and faith are available, hosted by Dirk Dunlap. A quarterly book group gathering (BG) hosted by Jim Clayton is also available. Please consider getting involved as your schedule and interest allow.

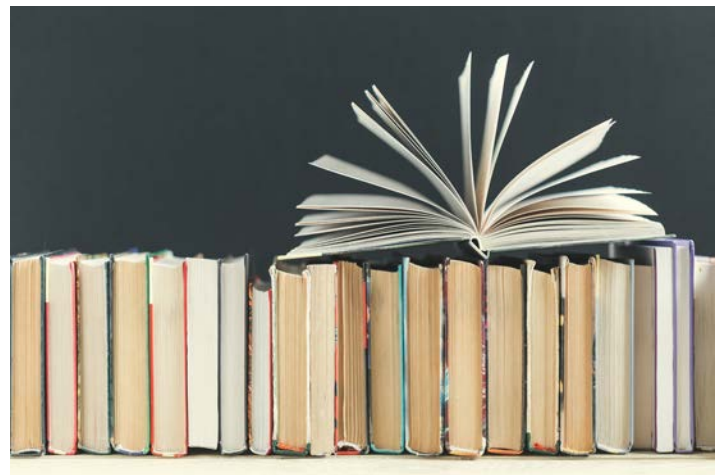
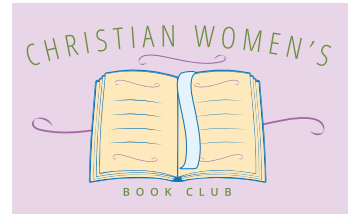
For further information, contact Steve Case at [scase135@outlook.com](mailto:scase135@outlook.com) or any of the individuals mentioned above. Watch for signups for MG events throughout the year. An invitation for the Men's Small Group Kickoff will be sent in early September.



## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

### Christian Women's Book Club Kickoff

Are you an avid reader looking to connect with other book-loving church members? Join us Wednesday, September 25 at 7:00pm at Elm Street Books to kick off a new year of reading, fun, and fellowship. This group reads a variety of books, including historical fiction, popular fiction, memoirs, and more! We will discuss any summertime favorites you might have read, plus talk about book club options for the fall. Please contact Lesley Cousley at [lacousley@gmail.com](mailto:lacousley@gmail.com).



## WELCOMING TEAM

### SAVE THE DATE

#### New Member Classes

We look forward to welcoming new members into our church community. If you have questions about the class or are interested in joining, please reach out to Anna Rogers at [welcoming@godsacre.org](mailto:welcoming@godsacre.org).



2024 | New Member Class  
2025

SAVE THE DATE

FALL 2024  
NEW MEMBERS CLASSES

New Member Orientation  
Sunday, October 20, 11:15am

New Member Faith Sharing  
Wednesday, October 23, 7:00pm

New Member Social  
Saturday, October 26, 4:00pm

New Member Sunday  
Sunday, October 27, 9:00am

## Women's Small Groups

Small Groups within our church are essential to deepening our engagement with others and with God. Join us to explore together our faith journeys as they play out in our daily lives. Groups will begin gathering in October and will meet monthly. Participate in person or via Zoom. Our 2024-25 groups are now forming. To learn more contact Marianna Kilbride at [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org)



## Mind and Spirit: The Intersection Between Mental Health and Faith

Join us this fall for a new Bible study focused on scripture, prayer, meditation, and fellowship to explore the connection between faith, spiritual practices, and mental health. We will discuss biblical insights and practical applications to support our journey toward mental wellness and inner peace. We will offer the Bible study from 8:15-9:30am every other Thursday in the library with a hybrid option beginning October 17. Please contact Allison Wolter at [youthgroup@godsacre.org](mailto:youthgroup@godsacre.org) or Kim Hall at [kimbhall@icloud.com](mailto:kimbhall@icloud.com) to sign up or for more information.



## Adult Bible Study - The Gospel of Mark

**Begins September 23**

**Mondays, 7:00am, Monday Morning Bible Study**

**Mondays, 9:15am, \*Women's Bible Study**

***\*This is a new date and time.***

The first of the canonical gospels, Mark, is also the shortest and fastest-paced. Meant to be offered orally, it is a dramatic read that highlights the urgency with which Mark felt the Gospel, the good news, must be communicated. Join us for eight weeks to delve into the context and meaning of Mark, through the lens of his own audience and from our own. Contact Marianna Kilbride at [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org) for more information or the Zoom link.

## Love Thy Neighbor

We are grateful for those who participate in the many Pastoral Care Ministry Teams. We engage and connect with one another by providing words of love and encouragement through a thoughtful prayer, a special visit, a shared cup of coffee or a walk, a beautiful prayer shawl to cover one with comfort and love, a handwritten note with carefully chosen words, a lovely bouquet of flowers delivered at just the right moment, or a long term, deep and caring relationship provided by our Stephen Ministers.

## Pastoral Care Welcome Gathering

Wednesday, September 11

7:00-8:30pm

The Baker Barn – 88 Lukes Wood Road,  
New Canaan, CT

We hope you will join us for our first Pastoral Care Gathering of the new program year. All are welcome! Please RSVP to Barb Clayton at [barb@godsacre.org](mailto:barb@godsacre.org) by September 9.



## Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is a Christian caregiving program where trained church members provide Christ-centered, support to others who are facing life challenges. Through compassionate listening, encouragement, and prayer, Stephen Ministers embody God's commandment to love one another as He loves us. Our church has been blessed with a vibrant Stephen Ministry since 2006, and we are excited to offer a new training class this coming January through March. If you feel called to serve our Church family in this meaningful way, please reach out to one of our Stephen Leaders: Beth Baker at [beth@godsacre.org](mailto:beth@godsacre.org), Maria Hemmings at [mariahemmings@hotmail.com](mailto:mariahemmings@hotmail.com), or Ann Whitaker at [ahwhittaker@yahoo.com](mailto:ahwhittaker@yahoo.com).



# Love Thy Neighbor

*Stephen  
Ministry*

*Card Writing  
Ministry*

*Prayer Chain  
Ministry*

*Flower  
Ministry*

*Helping Hands  
Ministry*

*Prayer Shawl  
Ministry*



Contact Beth Baker at [beth@godsacre.org](mailto:beth@godsacre.org)  
or Barb Clayton at [barb@godsacre.org](mailto:barb@godsacre.org)  
to get involved.

## Please Join Our Pastoral Care Community!

If you are interested in joining one or more of our Pastoral Care Ministry Teams, contact Beth Baker at [beth@godsacre.org](mailto:beth@godsacre.org) or Barb Clayton at [barb@godsacre.org](mailto:barb@godsacre.org).

Our **Helping Hands Ministry Team** provides care and support to those who need some temporary help. Whether it is someone who needs help after a hospitalization or calling upon a church member who might be experiencing a life transition, our team of "helping hands" is there to offer a bit of cheer or a listening ear or a quick local errand. Contact Sharon MacLachlan at [sharontinayvette@icloud.com](mailto:sharontinayvette@icloud.com) for ways to get involved.



The **Prayer Shawl Ministry Team** meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month, 10:30 - 12:00, (NEW time) in our Church Parlor to sit, knit and share each other's fellowship. Each prayer shawl is lovingly created and then blessed by the knitters and the congregation to wrap each recipient in God's love. No experience is needed; we will provide you with the yarn and teach you how to knit. Please contact Twee Haffner at [tweehaffner@gmail.com](mailto:tweehaffner@gmail.com) to join this ministry team.



The **Flower Ministry Team** is coordinated by Juliet Howe who helps with choosing the flowers and providing the training for our team of flower arrangers. These team members lovingly create our beautiful altar flowers for each Sunday service and many other occasions at the church. The team member in charge of the weekly arrangement chooses the flowers from a floral wholesaler for the larger arrangement and then helps to create smaller arrangements to be delivered to church members after the service. Contact Juliet Howe at [juliet@eehowe.com](mailto:juliet@eehowe.com) to join.



Our **Prayer Chain Ministry Team** provides prayers to a team of quiet prayer warriors who pray privately and confidentially when a request comes to the team members, via email. This ministry spans the geographic miles of our congregation of those who may have moved away or still live in town but come together to pray collectively. This team puts the power of prayer into action! Please contact Barb or Beth if you would like to join this important ministry.



Are you interested in helping to bring a smile to fellow church members? Please consider joining the **Card Writing Ministry Team**. We send handwritten notes to do-gooders, unsung heroes, those needing support, those going through a life change, etc. Please join us and write cards that make a difference in someone's life. We will supply you with beautiful church note cards, the recipient's name, address, and reason for the card. If you have questions, please contact Stephanie Radman at [stephanieradman@gmail.com](mailto:stephanieradman@gmail.com) or (203) 952-4554.



# KENYA: MARCH 22-APRIL 1, 2025

MAASAI MISSION TRIP SIGN-UPS KICKOFF SUNDAY



## Maasai Mission Trip to Kenya

### The History

The Maasai Mission is our congregation's living memorial to the victims of 9/11. In the midst of mourning, caring for the bereaved, lifting up the first responders, and realizing something had forever changed in our lives, we too felt called to respond. Out of a congregational meeting came the idea of shoring up an at-risk community, partnering with them, and together displacing evil with good. The partners we found were in Kenya, within the heart of the Christian and Muslim shared world. The first project was a water pipeline, the substance of life and a powerful metaphor for the path we were trying to walk. And so we began with a water walk to Mead Park, which seemed to hold past and future, near and far, heaven and earth in its moment of hope.

Our church has now partnered with Simba Maasai Outreach Organization (SIMOO) in Kenya for 20 years to substantially improve the lives of Maasai residents in East African villages. Women no longer walk miles for their water. Therefore, their children no longer must stay behind and care for the livestock but are able to go to school, a school that is funded by a dedicated group of our parishioners. When arriving home from school, the children have a better chance at a meal, thanks to the irrigation projects for vegetables and the women's chicken business for eggs, both also providing some income where there was none. Drought-resistant goats survive the now

longer periods of drought, and solar panels provide light at night for students to keep up in school. These and other projects our church has supported have gone a long way towards addressing the most urgent needs of the Maasai: water, food sustenance, and education. Our goal is to help this community become self-sustaining, become a model, and then spread the programs like ripples on a pond to surrounding communities.

### The Mission

This year's mission will be to help build a clinic in the village of Ilngarooj. When people are sick, they often do not get treatment due to the long walk to receive healthcare. Often, children are not vaccinated for TB, Polio, and additional diseases largely eradicated in other parts of the world. Women give birth at home to avoid difficult travel to reach a further clinic. The new clinic will address all these things. It will include a consultation room, a pharmacy, a lab, an injection room, and labor, delivery, and neonatal care rooms. After the clinic is built, it will be free for residents, staffed, and run by the government. An equally important part of our mission is to be in relationship with the Maasai community. We will have a chance to see the projects in action we have helped to bring about and to meet the Maasai people we have partnered with on them.



# Homefront Day

Saturday, September 21, 9:00am

Join us in repairing and rehabbing a Norwalk neighbor's home who cannot do so for health, age, or financial reasons. HomeFront, a community-based volunteer-driven home repair program, provides free repairs to qualified homeowners, enabling them to stay in their homes with improved quality of life. No experience is necessary, and lunch is included! Ages 14 and up are welcome. Contact Marianna Kilbride at [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org) to sign up.



# Nominating and Governance

The Nominating and Governance Committee (N&G-C) is delighted to announce two new developments. First, responding to the Deacons and Trustees establishing a new Music Committee, the N&G-C worked with multiple constituencies to develop a slate of candidates to fill the Music Committee ranks. Both processes followed the requirements set forth in our church bylaws.

The Music Committee is comprised of nine members with three members rotating off each year and replaced by new members serving three-year terms. The rotation of membership is consistent with most of the other committees of the church. In addition, a high school or college-aged youth member of the church will serve one-year terms. The youth member will constitute a tenth member. Due to the midyear start of the Music Committee, the first wave of members will serve until the March 2025 Annual Meeting.

In accordance with our church bylaws, The N&G-C developed a candidate slate and voted in favor of electing the new members. This slate will be presented to the Congregation at the next Annual Meeting for consideration and ratification.

Below is the roster of the newly elected Music Committee. Details of the Music Committee can be found in several other communications and in this newsletter.

	2026	2027	2028
<b>Music Committee (9+1)</b>	Tammie Garner	David Haddad	Nancy Upton (2 year Chair)
	Grant Carlson	Anne Emson	Lyn Chivvis
	William Picard	Michael Elliott	Mark Tedford
<b>Youth Member</b>	Caroline Haddad		

The second development is the interim appointment of Jessica Bottini to the Nominating & Governance Committee. Jessica was appointed unanimously by the Committee to fill the unexpired term of Anne Emson who resigned to join the Music Committee. Jessica will be ratified at the next Annual Meeting.

## Welcome Nerva Altino Director of Music Ministries

Nerva is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, where he received his Master's Degree in Music, and of Atlantic Union College, where he received a Bachelor's Degree in piano, with an emphasis in Sacred Music and Pipe Organ Studies. He immigrated to New York City from Haiti with his family as a child and grew up in Queens. His father was a church pianist who encouraged Nerva's love of music at a young age, and along with his brother, Nerva is part of a piano duo known as the Altino Brothers. Together, they've been blessed to perform in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Yale University's Woolsey Hall and The Library of Congress, and have also appeared on numerous television programs including CBS NY Sunday Morning, NBC's Today Show and the TBN Hour of Power in the Crystal Cathedral.

Nerva also has over 35 years of experience as a church organist, including over 25 years as a Music Director/Choral Leader, and his goal has always been to serve God wherever he makes music. He served for twelve years as the Director of Music Ministry at Alexandria Presbyterian Church in Milford, NJ, and as the Director of Music Ministry for the past nine years at his home church, the Linden Seventh Day Adventist



Church in Laurelton, New York. He also has deep experience working with and teaching music to children, in both church choirs and through private instruction. Nerva currently resides in Brooklyn, NY with his wife, Jelaine, and they have two adult daughters.

## New Chancel Choir Section Leaders

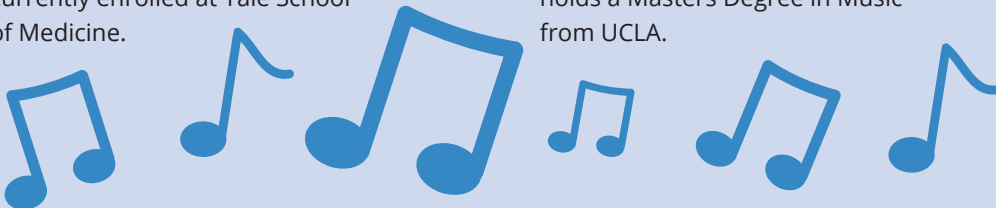
We have two new section leaders who will be joining the Chancel Choir.



**Katie Tiemeyer - soprano**  
currently enrolled at Yale School of Medicine.



**Shyheim Hinnan - bass**  
holds a Masters Degree in Music from UCLA.



## Blessings of Music

As we celebrate this exciting time of transition in the Music Ministries of our church, please consider donating to the Mary Bradley Clarke Fund to support our music program.



## VBS: Carrying the Torch Fun!

We had a fantastic week at the end of August, hosting Vacation Bible School: Carrying the Torch. Over 60 campers and counselors joined us for four days of faith-building, learning, fellowship, and Olympic-themed fun! Campers explored several Old and New Testament Stories that involve light. In exploring these stories, kids deepened their understanding of what it means to spread God's light and love and be "torchbearers" in the world. Many thanks to our amazing junior and senior counselors, who helped make the week such a special and enriching experience for all.



## Middle School Church School: Donuts and Debrief

We have solicited a large amount of feedback regarding our Church School offerings for middle school. Our Middle-School Church School offering for 6th and 7th graders will be an entirely new model this year. This age group will have a reserved space to sit together in the Meeting House and stay in the service through the end of the sermon. At this point, middle schoolers will exit the Meeting House and head to the Parlor for "Donuts and Debrief" – a guided reflection and lively discussion led by teachers, youth advisors, high schoolers, and

other faith mentors (featuring donuts, of course). We will be reaching out to this age group directly with more specific information and a Church School calendar for the year that highlights Sunday service projects and "donut and debrief" Church School classes.



## Family Playground and Pizza Meet Up

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, September 12, from 4:00-6:00pm

Children's Ministries will host an informal family meet-up on our playground! Join us at any point for fun, fellowship, and pizza to gather together at the start of the church year.



## Clementine's Playdates

We will offer Clementine's Playdates on Wednesday mornings beginning in October. Children aged three and under are invited to join us with a caregiver for faith-based play, fun, songs, stories, and games. Please contact Sarah Haddad at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org) for registration information.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### Children and Families Fall Events

#### September 8

Kickoff Sunday: First day of Church School and Welcome Back Celebration

#### September 12

4:00-6:00pm

Family Playground Pizza Meet Up

#### September 22

10:00am

Church School Communion Workshop for 4th graders.

#### October 4

4:00-4:30pm

Blessing of the Animals on the Church Steps.

#### October 6

10:00am

Fourth Grade First Communion

#### October 25

5:00-6:30pm

Family Halloween Party

#### October 27

Following 10:00am worship

Trunk-or-Treat

#### November 24

During and following 10:00am worship

Turkey Drive Service Project

## Confirmation: Save the Date!

Save the date for our Confirmation Discernment Meeting on Wednesday, October 9, at 7:00pm in the Chapel. This meeting is mandatory for both prospective confirmands and their parents. Registration information will be distributed at the meeting. Confirmation classes will take place on alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7:00-8:15pm. Please contact Sarah Haddad at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org) with questions.

## Youth Ministries Staffing 2024

As we kick off this exciting program year, we're thrilled to share a quick guide on who will join your children for their activities, especially with Kelly on maternity leave this fall! Take a look below to see who the primary contact is for your child's group. We can't wait for another wonderful year together!



### Kimmie Dyrvik

Interim Senior Youth Director  
Email: [kimmie@godsacre.org](mailto:kimmie@godsacre.org)

Kimmie will be the primary contact and lead staff member for **YG, JYG, Guppies & Minnows**.



### Jemuel St Jean

MSYG Lead Advisor  
Email: [jem@godsacre.org](mailto:jem@godsacre.org)

Jemuel will be the primary contact and lead staff member for **MSYG!**



### Greer Lyle

JYG and Guppies Advisor

Greer will be providing support to Kimmie with the weekly programming for our **JYG & Guppies!**



### Marnie Miller

Minnows Advisor

Marnie will be providing support to Kimmie with the weekly programming for our **Minnows!**

## Kickoff & Parent Meetings

### All are welcome on God's Acre!

As people of faith, we know we belong to God and we find belonging in the special communities God creates—like our youth groups! This fall, join the group for your grade, where you'll find love, support, and a sense of purpose. It's a fantastic time to explore a youth group and invite a new friend along for the journey. We can't wait for all the fun and meaningful moments ahead!

## Kickoff Week!

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4



**YG Senior Leader Meeting** 6:30pm  
**YG Veterans Reunion, grades 10-12,**  
7:00-8:00pm

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8



**Kick-off Carnival Youth Group (YG)** grades 9-12,  
6:00-7:30pm



**Kick-off Craziiness!** Middle School Youth Group  
**(MSYG)** grades 6-8, 3:30-5:00pm

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9



**Minnows** - grades K & 1, 3:30-4:30pm

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10



**Guppies** - grades 2 & 3, 4:30-5:30pm

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12



**JYG** - grades 4 & 5, 5:00-6:00pm

## PARENT MEETINGS!

**Required MSYG Parent Meeting**  
Thursday, September 19  
7:00pm

**Required YG Parent Meeting**  
Sunday, October 20  
7:00pm

# Youth & Choir Program Times 2024-2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
 <p>Church School (Nursery-7th grade) 10:00 – 11:00am</p>	 <p>Minnows (grades K-1) 3:30 – 4:30pm</p>	 <p>Spirit Singers (grades 2 &amp; 3) 3:30 – 4:30pm</p>	 <p>Cherubs (ages 4–grade 1) 3:30 – 4:00pm</p>
 <p>MSYG (grades 6, 7, 8) 4:00 – 5:30pm</p>		 <p>Guppies (grades 2 &amp; 3) 4:30 – 5:30pm</p>	 <p>Joyful Noise (grades 4 &amp; 5) 4:00 – 5:00pm</p>
 <p>Quest (grades 9–12) 6:00 – 7:00pm Monthly</p>	 <p>Scan to Register!</p>		 <p>JYG (grades 4 &amp; 5) 5:00 – 6:00pm</p>
 <p>YG (grades 9-12) 7:00 – 8:30pm</p>			 <p>Quest (grades 9–12) 7:00 – 8:30pm Monthly</p>

## YG Senior Retreat Recap!

Here's a peek at the fantastic time our rising Senior Leaders had on their annual retreat in the



Berkshires! From whitewater rafting adventures to campfire s'mores, the group enjoyed a perfect mix of fun and reflection. They took time to reconnect with each other and soak in the beauty of God's creation while also considering who Christ is calling them to be in our Youth Group this year. It was an unforgettable weekend that set the tone for an amazing year ahead!



## LIFE EVENTS

### Birth

John and Brynn Loboda welcomed their first baby, Samuel, on February 22, 2024. He arrived almost a month early and was 7lbs 10oz. John and Brynn are loving every second of parenthood!



### Weddings

Melissa Galione, daughter of Susan & Tom Galione, married Bryan Galvin on June 8.



Lauren Carlson, daughter of Dionna & Dave Carlson, married Alex Lambrinos on July 20.

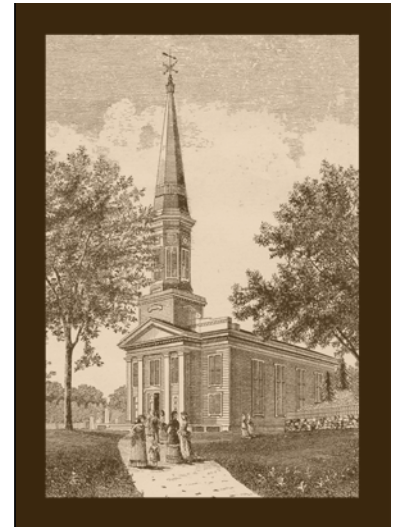


## HISTORY MINISTRY TEAM

# History Team Research Project

## The History Ministry team wants help!

We are finalizing a research outline that we anticipate will take several years to execute. We are focusing on creating brief ancestral analyses of the key founding families of Canaan Parish (we see many of their names on the walls). We also want to document the key macro factors that generally influenced these families and the region in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Our goal is to complete our work on or around January 1, 2030. We anticipate publishing our findings in a way that is yet to be determined in celebration of the 300th anniversary of our church. This won't be a heavy lift (unless you want to make it that way). We have seven active members now and would love more participants to join our team. We meet monthly in person in the library or via Zoom on the first Thursday of each month at 4:00pm. Our next meetings are on September 5 and October 3. Anyone interested in participating by taking on a portion of the research, please get in touch with Steve Case at [scase135@outlook.com](mailto:scase135@outlook.com) or attend a future team meeting.



## In Loving Memory

John T. Banigan  
April 10, 1949 - July 28, 2024



Donald C. Gilbert  
January 11, 1933 - July 13, 2024



## OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

### Minister

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Chapin Garner, **x101**  
Senior Minister

Pastoral Care Emergency, **x103**

### Staff

Nerva Altino, **x104**  
Director of Music Ministries

Kelly Antonson, **x110**  
Senior Youth Director

Beth Baker, **x102**  
Interim Minister of Pastoral Care

Laurel Carr, **x107**  
Director of Communications

Barb Clayton, **x102**  
Interim Minister of Pastoral Care

Lindsey Daly, **x112**  
Director of Children's Ministries

Lonnie deMarco, **x116**  
Interim Operations and Finance Resource

Kimmie Dyrvik, **x111**  
Interim Senior Youth Director

Tracy Goldman, **x109**  
Community Life Coordinator

Sarah Haddad, **x113**  
Church School Coordinator

Anthony Jones  
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, **x105**  
Director of Spiritual Formation

Caroline Smittle, **x106**  
Director of Operations

Greer Lyle, **x115**  
Director of Children's Music and Drama

Jem St. Jean, **x111**  
MSYG Lead Advisor

Maria Stadnik, **x108**  
Director of Finance

Allison Wolter, **x114**  
Youth Ministries Administrative Assistant

### Church Lay Leadership

Lonnie deMarco  
Chair, Personnel

Amy Werner  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Peter Wilson  
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Dionna Carlson  
Chair, Board of Deacons



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*We are a Stephen Minister Church*

## Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the October newsletter, please submit by September 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)