

WORSHIP SERVICE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2024, 10:00AM

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PRELUDE

Laudate Dominum (Praise The Lord)

Wolfgang A. Mozart

*HYMN #210

Crown Him With Many Crowns

George J. Elvey

Verses 1, 2, and 5

WORDS OF WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

Leader: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.

**People: We will love the Lord our God with all our heart,
and soul, and strength.**

Leader: Keep these words the Lord is commanding you today.

People: We will recite them to our children,

**All: We will talk about them when we are at home
and when we are away, when we lie down and
when we rise.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against
You in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and
by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our
whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of Your
Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we
may delight in Your will, and walk in Your ways, to the glory
of Your Name. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (adapted from Psalm 145:8-9)

Leader: The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

People: God is good to all and divine compassion extends to all creation.

Leader: Receive the good news, in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: Alleluia! Amen!

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you

ANTHEM

Trust Me

Richard Smallwood

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERSHIP COMMISSIONING

Pastor: Bearing one another's burdens is a core calling for every Christian. Some have responded to God's call to care through specialized training as Stephen Ministers and Leaders. We gather today to commission Ann Whittaker as a Stephen Leader.

Stephen Leader: Ann, you are being commissioned today as a Stephen Leader. Because of your unique gifts and training, we now charge you to build awareness of our Stephen Ministry program, to lead and support our Stephen Ministers, to work collaboratively with our Stephen Leaders and Pastoral Care Ministers, and to rigorously uphold the confidentiality of all Stephen Ministry relationships.

Stephen Leader: Ann, will you take on these leadership responsibilities to strengthen our Stephen Ministry program and the love and care we offer our congregation? If so, please say, "I will, with God's help."

Candidate: I will, with God's help.

Pastor: Members of the congregation, will you support Ann and help her receive the resources she needs for this ministry, affirm the Stephen Ministers she trains and supervises, and will you pray for her as a servant of Jesus Christ? If so, answer, "We will, with God's help."

Congregation: We will, with God's help.

Pastor: Ann, may God's Holy Spirit fill you with joy, peace, and grace as you serve as a Stephen Leader. Amen.

*All children through grade 5 recess to Smith Hall
Grades 6 & 7 remain in the Meeting House through the sermon*

*HYMN #449

Lead On, O King Eternal Ernest Shurleff/Henry T. Smart
Verses 1 and 3

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 8:27-35

Minister: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

"Self Denial and Ballroom Dancing*"

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Chapin Garner

Grades 6 & 7 dismiss to the Parlor

SERMON RESPONSE

Jesus Messiah

Chris Tomlin

Juliette Rao Hawkins

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As a congregation, we pray together – through word, silence, and
The Lord's Prayer (sins)

PRAYER RESPONSE #278
Hear Our Prayer, O God

George Whelpton

STEPHEN MINISTRY REFLECTION & CALL TO OFFERING

Please pass the burgundy welcome books

OFFERTORY

Glorious is Thy Name

Wolfgang A. Mozart

*DOXOLOGY (unison)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN #191

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

Spiritual

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Improvisation on "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley
Spiritual/arr. Nerva Altino

*Congregation please stand.

ARE YOU VISITING OUR CHURCH TODAY?

Welcome, and thank you for worshipping with us! If you have questions about our church or wish to join us for our next new member class, please contact Anna Rogers at (203) 274-0097 or welcoming@godsacre.org.

PRAYER SHAWL BLESSING

The prayer shawls displayed today were made with love and prayers by our Prayer Shawl Ministry. The shawls are given to those experiencing significant life challenges. During our prayers today, we ask for God's blessing on the shawls, and pray for those who receive them. New members are always welcome. No experience is needed! For more information, contact Twee Haffner at tweehaffner@gmail.com or (203) 966-0606.

OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY TEAM

Beth Baker (Stephen Leader)
Maria Hemmings (Stephen Leader)
Ann Whittaker (Stephen Leader)

Chris Bach
Gail Banigan
Lyn Chivvis
Barb Clayton
Pamela Crum
Hermine Davis
Shawn Gardner
Courtney Flynn
Jeanne Fredericks
Parry Grogan
Twee Haffner
Kim Hall
Kathy Johnston
Joan Lister
Penny Mardoian
Fatou Niang
Martha Palmer
Tom Robey

NEWS OF THE CONGREGATION

AMO MAASAI MISSION TRIP – MEETING TODAY AT 11:15AM

Join us March 22-April 1, 2025, on our Adult Maasai Mission Trip to Kenya. Meet our longtime Maasai partners and help build a clinic. Interested congregants, please gather in the Parlor today at 11:15am for an informational meeting. Sign-ups are in progress and will run through October 4. For more information, contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org.

BIBLE STUDY - THE GOSPEL OF MARK: BEGINS SEPTEMBER 23

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 needed to 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. Offered Mondays at 7:00am in the Library or at 9:15am (Women's) in the Parlor. **Please note new day and time for Women's Bible Study.** Contact Marianna Kilbride, marianna@godsacre.org for more information or a Zoom link.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Please do not forget to register your child for church school and all other youth programming. Should anyone be interested in joining our Children and Family Ministry Team, please reach out to Lindsey at lindsey@godsacre.org.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC AND DRAMA

Children's Choir will sing their first musical offering for the 10:00am service next Sunday, September 22! Does your child love music and enjoys our weekly youth offering? Come try it out this week!

Spirit Singers (2nd & 3rd Grade) – Tuesday, 3:30-4:30pm

Cherubs (Ages 4-1st Grade) – Thursday, 3:30-4:00pm

Joyful Noise (4th & 5th Grade) – Thursday, 4:00-5:00pm

CHURCH SCHOOL DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Nursery (2 months-2 years):

Drop off opens at 9:45am prior to service; pick up following service.

Pre School (3s/4s):

Drop off in Room 1 prior to service; pick up following service.

Kindergarten/First Grade:

Families have the option to drop off in Room 4 prior to service or children can begin in the Sanctuary; pick up following service.

Second/Third Grade:

Children begin in Sanctuary with families; pick up in Room 3B following service.

Fourth/Fifth Grade:

Children begin in Sanctuary with families then meet in Room 7. Children are released to Smith Hall following service.

Sixth/Seventh Grade:

Children begin in Sanctuary with families and remain in the service through the sermon. Children exit to the Parlor after the sermon for “Donuts and Debrief” and are released to Smith Hall following service.

CLEMENTINE’S PLAYDATES

Clementine’s Playdates is a caregiver and child programming opportunity for infants through age 3. Children and caregivers will enjoy time for socialization, play, music and the introduction of early concepts of faith. Our fall programming will begin on Wednesday, October 2. Registration is open. Please reach out to churchschool@godsacre.org for the link to register.

CONFIRMATION – SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 9

New confirmation classes will begin October 22 and will be held on rotating Tuesday & Wednesdays from 7:00-8:15pm in the Parlor. We ask that you save the date for our mandatory discernment meeting for both parents and prospective confirmands scheduled for Wednesday, October 9 at 7:00pm. Registration will be distributed following attendance at the meeting. Contact Sarah Haddad, at churchschool@godsacre.org for more information.

FALL FELLOWSHIP - HOSTS NEEDED

If you would like to join the Fellowship Team or host coffee hour this fall, please get in touch with Laurel Carr at laurel@godsacre.org or sign up in Smith Hall after worship.

FALL NEW MEMBER CLASS DATES

Interested in joining our family of faith? Please attend our new member sessions this fall. Contact Anna Rogers at welcoming@godsacre.org to learn more or RSVP.

New Member Orientation Class: Sunday, October 20,
11:15am-1:15pm

New Member Faith Sharing Class: Wednesday, October 23,
7:00-9:00pm

New Member Social: Saturday, October 26, 4:00-6:00pm

New Member Sunday: Sunday, October 27, 9:00-11:00am

FOURTH GRADE FIRST COMMUNION

Next Sunday during church school our fourth graders will participate in a Communion workshop where they will learn how and why we take communion in our church. Fourth graders will take part in their first communion on October 6 during the service.

HOLY SMOKES FELLOWSHIP BBQ

Reunite with church friends this fall and enjoy a classic Memphis BBQ with all the fixins! Join us on Saturday, September 28, from 6:00-9:00pm for food, fellowship, and fun! Please bring your favorite adult beverage to share. The cost is \$30pp. RSVP by September 22 to Laurel Carr at laurel@godsacre.org.

HOMEFRONT DAY – SEPTEMBER 21 AT 9:00AM

Join us to repair and rehab a Norwalk neighbor's home who cannot do so for health, age, or financial reasons. No experience necessary, and lunch is included! Ages 14 and up are welcome. Sign up during fellowship time or contact Marianna Kilbride, marianna@godsacre.org.

MEN'S SMALL GROUP MINISTRY KICKOFF – SEPTEMBER 30

The men in our church are blessed to have many ways to walk together and support each other throughout the year. We are planning an introductory Men's Small Groups Meeting on Monday, September 30, at 7:30pm (pizza and salad included), where we will explain how to get involved and kick off our program. Contact Steve Case at scase135@outlook.com to learn more.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

This season, we have a special opportunity to make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Have you been interested in choir or bells but have been nervous to join? This year, our new Music Director, Nerva Altino, will be meeting many new faces - including yours! No prior music training is required to join choir or bells, just the desire to sing and/or ring. Music parts for practice are released prior to rehearsals. Please check the calendar for all the opportunities or contact Nerva at nerva@godsacre.org.

PFLAG SUPPORT GROUP

Are you or someone you care about a member of the LGBTQIA+ community? Founded in 1973, PFLAG is the first and largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and their families. We will host a PFLAG support group meeting for adults (18+) in the Parlor on Thursday, September 19 from 6:30-7:30pm to share joys and struggles and lift each other up. RSVPs aren't necessary, but feel free to email polly.obrienmorrow@gmail.com for more information.

SEPTEMBER PLATE OFFERING & SNEAKER TREE

Our plate offering during September goes to Inspirica, our Stamford partner striving to end homelessness and housing insecurity, largely in Fairfield County. Sign up to buy sneakers for a chosen child during fellowship time after the 10:00am service. Sneakers may be returned to the box in Smith Hall or mailed directly to the church (c/o Tracy Goldman) no later than October 6. Contact Debbie Shew, scwheatentierrier@yahoo.com.

TODDLERTIME INFORMATIONAL SESSION

Church members are invited to join us for conversation in the Chapel at 11:15 today, childcare will be provided.

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 are now forming and will begin gathering in October. Participate in our monthly meetings in person or via Zoom. Contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org if interested.

YOUTH THIS WEEK

Join us for your respective youth group! New friends are always welcome! For questions about our ministries, contact Kimmie Dyrvik at kimmie@godsacre.org. For questions about registration, contact Allison Wolter at youthgroup@godsacre.org.

Sunday, September 15

Scavenger Hunt, Middle School Youth Group (MSYG), grades 6-8, 4:00-5:30pm

Scavenger Hunt, Youth Group (YG), grades 9-12, 7:00-8:30pm

Tuesday, September 17

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

Thursday, September 19

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

MSYG Parent Meeting, MSYG Parents, 7:00-8:00pm

Quest Welcome Dinner, grades 9-12, 7:00-8:30pm

PARTICIPATING IN WORSHIP:

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Chapin Garner

Senior Minister

Marianna Kilbride

Director of Spiritual Formation

Beth Baker & Barb Clayton

Ministers of Pastoral Care

Maria Hemmings

Stephen Leader

Ann Whittaker

Stephen Leader

Tom Robey

Stephen Minister

Nerva Altino

Director of Music Ministries

Juliette Rao Hawkins

Soloist

DEACON OF THE MONTH

Tammie Garner

We are a welcoming, inclusive and compassionate church community where difference and diversity are valued. We gather to promote the love and knowledge of the God revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Redeemer and Friend, and welcome all to participate in the life of our church regardless of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, ability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

We invite you to make an offering today.

