

WORSHIP SERVICE
DECEMBER 7, 2025, 10:00AM
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

PRELUDE

Improvisation on Advent Hymn

Christy Nockels/arr. Nerva Altino

*HYMN #127

Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates

George Weissel

WORDS OF WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

ADVENT WITNESS

The Arestia Family

Family: The prophet Malachi calls us to watch for the messenger God will send us, a messenger who burns with a passion for God's coming salvation. "...he will purify them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness." (adapted from Malachi 3)

People: In a world driven by a passion to maintain the status quo, we choose to live with a passion for God's peace.

Family: We choose to listen to those who call us righteousness.

People: We choose to submit ourselves to God's grace.

All: That we might be refined and purified until we reflect God's love throughout the earth.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

Family: We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to passionately pursue the work of making peace in our hearts.

Family: Peace in our families, peace in our communities, and
peace throughout the earth.
Family: May the Peace of Christ be with you.
People: And also with you.
Family: Please greet one another with the Peace of Christ.

*Children through grade 3 recess to Church School.
Grades 4-7 remain in the Meeting House for communion.*

*HYMN

The Thrill of Hope

Christy Nockels

Verse

Christ whose glory fills the skies
Christ the everlasting Light
Son of righteousness arise
Triumph o'er these shades of night

Come Thou long awaited One
In the fullness of Your love
Loose this heart bound up by shame
And I will never be the same

Chorus

Here I wait in hope of You
Oh my soul's longing through and through
Dayspring from on high be near
Daystar in my heart appear
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SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 122

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

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“A Vision of Shalom”
Eliana Cañas Parra

SERMON RESPONSE

My Hope is Built

Edward Mote/William Bradbury
Megan Maloney, soprano

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

PRAYER RESPONSE

Rejoice! Come, Emmanuel

Nerva Altino

CALL TO OFFERING

Please pass the burgundy welcome books.

OFFERTORY

All Rise

Babbie Mason/arr. David Clydesdale

Featuring: Greer Lyle, soprano

*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

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

(We eat the bread as we receive it. We drink the cup together.)

COMMUNION MUSIC

Just As I Am

William Bradbury

How Can I Keep from Singing

American Folksong/arr. Richard Walters

*HYMN #116

People, Look East

French Carol

Verses 1, 2, and 4

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley/arr. Nerva Altino

*Congregation please stand.

Thank you to Jane & Charlie Loop for hosting our fellowship time this morning. Please join us for coffee in Smith Hall immediately following the service.

The Disciples Deck Question:
Card 13: "What is Peace?"

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.

NEWS OF THE CONGREGATION

2026 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Our 2026 Stewardship Campaign is focused on love and Christ's call to "feed my lambs." We ask that you take a moment to reflect on the love you've shared, received, and witnessed throughout the past year. You may pledge using the pledge cards found in your pew or by utilizing the QR code on the back of your bulletin.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY – BEGINS TOMORROW!

Join us as we explore the sacred stories of Jesus' birth, sparking our imaginations about life 2,000 years ago and the world yet to come. Meet in the Library or on Zoom on Mondays at 7:00-8:00am and 9:15-10:15am (Women's) on December 8 and 15. Contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org with questions or to sign up.

ADVENT MUSICAL MOMENTS – BEGINS WEDNESDAY

On select Wednesdays during Advent, we invite you to join us at 12:00pm for 30 minutes of music, scripture, and prayer. **On December 10**, soprano Greer Lyle will share her gift of music, and on December 17, Nerva Altino will be featured on piano and organ. For more information, please contact Nerva Altino at nerva@godsacre.org.

ADVENT OUTREACH PROJECTS AT THE MISSIONS TABLE

DOVES: A donation of \$50.00 to Person-to-Person goes towards grocery gift cards to buy a day's worth of food for Christmas for those in need. Contact Debbie Simpson at debcsimpson24@gmail.com.

ANGELS: Thank you in advance for purchasing a gift for a homeless child. Contact Beth Picard at bpicard44@gmail.com.

BELLS: Sign up for a one-hour slot and come ring the Salvation Army Bells at Walter Stewart's Market to raise funds for our local neighbors in need. Contact Beth Picard at bpicard44@gmail.com.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR ON DECEMBER 21

We invite all children and their families to join us on Sunday, December 21, from 3:00-5:00pm for our Christmas Children's Craft Fair. Smith Hall will be transformed into a Holiday Workshop to create and wrap presents for loved ones in time for Christmas. We hope your family can come and experience the magic of giving during the Christmas season! While this is not a drop-off event, parents are invited to enjoy a moment of respite and fellowship in the Parlor while their children craft in Smith Hall. Please see your email to RSVP.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES – DECEMBER 24

Join us for worship on God's Acre this Christmas Eve!
4:00pm Family Service featuring the children of our church
6:00pm Worship Service
6:30pm Caroling on God's Acre
7:00pm Worship Service
11:00pm Candlelight Worship Service
Livestream worship will be available on our website at www.godsacre.org/worship

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Donations for our Christmas Flower display have begun. Contributions and bulletin listings should be sent to Tracy Goldman at office@godsacre.org by noon on Monday, December 15. Donating is easy! You may send your check, give online, bring it to the church office, or use the special envelope in the bulletin and place it in the collection plate. Please let us know if the flowers are given in memory of a loved one.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP SERVICE WITH COMMUNION- TONIGHT

Join us for contemporary worship on the first Sunday of each month (October–May), 6:00pm in the Chapel. Enjoy uplifting music, meaningful worship, and communion. Come as you are and bring a friend tonight when Raymond Fellow, Elyon Wells, will preach!

DECEMBER PLATE OFFERING

The December plate offering will go directly to those with the greatest need in our local community. Your generous donation will be shared between the New Canaan Food Pantry and the New Canaan Human Services.

FULFILLING 2025 PLEDGES

We are grateful for your generous pledges, which are essential to the operation of our church. If we can fulfill our 2025 pledges, we will end the year in sound financial shape and be in a good position for the new year ahead. We encourage those who are able to stay current on their pledge commitment so that we may be best prepared for 2026.

NATIVITY PAGEANT – NEXT SUNDAY!

The children of our church will celebrate our time-honored Nativity Pageant on Sunday, December 14, during the 10:00am service. Please come and support our kids as they act out the true meaning of Christmas.

PACIFIC HOUSE HOMELESS SHELTER – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Once a month (every third Thursday), our church provides and serves dinner at the Pacific House Homeless Shelter in Stamford. Volunteers are needed to both contribute food items and serve a hot meal to approximately 60 men residing at the shelter. Contact Andy Parkin, andyparkin7@gmail.com for details on how to help.

WINTER FELLOWSHIP - HOSTS NEEDED

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

WITNESS IN THE WEST BANK

Join Chapin and Frank Lyon on **Sunday, December 14**, at 9:00am in the Chapel for a special presentation on their recent visit to Taybeh, the last remaining all-Christian town in the West Bank. Through photos and stories, they will share what it means to live the love and justice of Jesus in a place of both hardship and hope, and how our church's relationships are making a difference.

YOUTH MINISTRIES & CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

Happy Holidays! For any questions about youth programming, please contact kimmie@godsacre.org. For questions about youth choirs, please contact greer@godsacre.org.

Sunday, December 7

MSYG, Salvation Army Bell Ringing, grades 6-8, 4:00-5:30pm

YG, ***Progressive Supper**, grades 9-12, 7:00-9:00pm

*Meet at host family homes

Monday, December 8

Nativity Pageant Rehearsal & Cast Party, all participants, 4:00-6:00pm

Tuesday, December 9

Nativity Pageant Rehearsal, grades 2-3, 4:00-6:00pm

Thursday, December 11

Nativity Pageant Rehearsal, grades 4-5, 4:00-6:00pm

PARTICIPATING IN WORSHIP:

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Chapin Garner

Senior Minister

Eliana Cañas Parra

Seminary Intern/ Raymond Fellow

Marianna Kilbride

Director of Spiritual Formation

Nerva Altino

Director of Music Ministries

Leigh Engen

AV Tech Leader

DEACON OF THE MONTH

Trey Laird

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 your pledge today.

