



news @ GOD'S ACRE

June 2018

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From the Pastor's Study

Dear Church Family,

As we transition from spring to summer, I know many of you feel as if you are on the cusp of a more manageable schedule.



Last year someone commented to me that "May has become the new December". I had forgotten that particular insight until we found ourselves in May again this year, with more activities than there is room on the calendar. Proms, graduations, final exams, spring sports schedules,

recitals, concerts, and a whole host of "end of year" activities that every organization - including our church - invite you and your family to be a part of can be more than overwhelming. However, a little summer relief is just around the corner.

Summer vacations, time away with family, moments when our technological connectivity is graciously interrupted; time at the beach, by the pool, or on the boat with nothing better to do than lounge, read a good book, and talk with people we enjoy; leisure-

ly dinners that run late into the night, a pleasant round of golf with good friends, or a family adventure that can only be had when school is out - the blessings of summer abound...and those blessings are about to be upon us - thanks be to God!

Summer is also a wonderful time on God's Acre! While I was initially told that everyone in Fairfield County leaves for the summer, I have discovered that is not entirely accurate - in fact, it is far from the truth...

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“ Summer is a wonderful opportunity to observe the spiritual discipline of Sabbath rest and renewal... ”

From the Pastor's Study
Continued from page 1

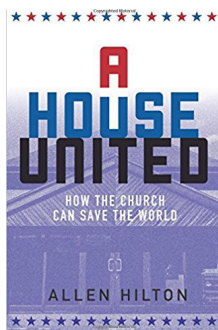
...I see so many of you enjoying summer in and around New Canaan. The weather is great, town activities are abundant and fun, and there are just enough folks away at one time to allow for easy parking on Elm Street.

This is a roundabout way of saying that I know many, if not most of you, are actually in the area quite a bit during summertime, and I would love for you to join us when you are around! Summer Worship in the Memorial Garden, Fellowship events on wonderfully warm and pleasant evenings, and the ability to stay connected to the church family we all love is all a part of this truly restful season in the life of our church and in this region of our country.

So, as you make summer plans with the hope of a more relaxed schedule, include some time on God's Acre. Summer is a wonderful opportunity to observe the spiritual discipline of Sabbath rest and renewal, and, in my opinion, there is no place better to observe that sacred practice than on God's Acre.

Yours in Christ,
 Chapin

A House United Book Discussion



Save the date: Thursday, July 19 at 7:00pm

Join Eric for a book discussion on *A House United*, by Rev. Allen Hilton. Enjoy an evening of conversation, fellowship and refreshments at the 7 St. John's Place Parsonage. Get a head start on your reading and pick up your copy today at Elm Street Books.

Rev. Hilton came and led what he calls a Courageous Conversation at our church on Pentecost Sunday. The event was well received. In his book he describes how the Church can take the lead on bridging the cultural, theological and political divide in our nation. He offers practical guidance for having difficult conversations and insists that every viewpoint is important.

Thank You Volunteers!

***For we are God's servants, working together;
 you are God's field, God's building.***

1 Corinthians 3:9

We are blessed to have a community that is engaged and working together to make a difference here on our campus, in our community and in the world. So thank you to ALL who gave their time and talents, in every way, this program year on God's Acre! We look forward to continuing God's works together in the coming year.

Adventures at ToddlerTime Nursery School summer camp are waiting for you!

We have camps for children ages 18 months until they enter kindergarten. Each week is rich in exploration, imagination, creativity and good old fashioned play. Our camp has themes such as Explorers

Club, Outdoor Art Blast, Pop Fizz Academy, Chopped @ ToddlerTime, Out of the Box, Once Upon a Time and Kaleidoscope Adventures.

Our exciting Explorers Club is for 4s and 5s and the children have daily field trips on a bus! We offer weekly and multiple week sessions between June 19 and July 28. Ages 3 (by the first day of camp) to 5 is open to everyone. Camp for 18 months to 2.5 are ToddlerTime students only current or fall enrolled.

ToddlerTime is located at 23 Park Street on the ground floor of The Congregational Church. For more information or to register visit www.toddlerTime.org or call (203)972-3111.



ToddlerTime
 Nursery School

**rejoice@
 God's Acre
 this summer!**

**See the back
 page for
 the summer
 preaching and
 music schedule!**

A Farewell Message from Ms. Noëlle

"To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life - this is indeed a gift from God." Ecclesiastes 5:19

My arrival as Director of Children's Music & Drama back in October 2015 seemed like a whirlwind. Transition was ever present in my then current state, and I held onto high hopes of finding a position where I could make a difference and promote positive outreach and way of living, especially to youth. What better way than to accept a music job at a church- to use what I believe to be my highest calling, my passion, and one of my loves in life. I love music thanks to growing up in the church and the beloved music teachers from my childhood. I made a promise to myself that if I got the opportunity to work with the children of The Congregational Church of New Canaan, I would give them a similar experience.

As I look back on my three years here I am moved, honored, and feel blessed to have been a part of the ever-forward-moving light that is the spirit of this church. Wednesdays and Sundays will be imprinted on my heart as I will never forget what it feels like to be with the children of this church, teaching the theology of the church through music. Watching them stand proud in "big church" (10:00am Service) singing their very own verse of the opening hymn - not only because they've been sung to, but because they really do know how to hold and read the songs in our hymnal. Watching them lead service through our children's musical and Celebration Sunday - demonstrating that they too know the elements of our church service. Engaging with them in church school, in mindful conversation about faith and service to others. And my favorite memory: walking in costume to the New Canaan Inn to bring our musical to the residents, making them smile, laugh and feel joy! *Continued on page 5*



Ms Noelle, Mrs. Jody, and Mrs. Marianne with the Spirit Singers

Celebration Sunday

A Church-Wide Event

Sunday, June 10, 10:00am

A Church School-led service with a Minister's message and songs from our Youth Choirs! After the service, attend our Annual All-



Church Picnic hosted by the Fellowship Ministry Team. Families with last names A-H please bring salad, fruit, or side dish for 10; families with last names I-Z please bring a dessert for 10.

Enjoy cookie decorating, face painting, lawn games, and many other fun-filled activities! All are invited to help decorate our Church School Psalms banner.

It's going to be a spectacular morning! See you there!

Church School Coordinator

We are looking for someone with a passion for children's faith formation to assist our Director of Children's Formation on a part-time basis (10-15 hours per week) for the 2018-2019 program year. The primary responsibility would be to serve as an advocate and cheerleader for the program, helping families to maintain their connection and participation in faith formation activities. The Coordinator would also assist the Director of Children's Formation in the planning and execution of events and programs for church school, children and families.

Requirements would include a deep commitment to your own faith formation, and familiarity with the people, culture and routines of our church. Hours are extremely flexible - weekly Sunday morning attendance is not required, but occasional Sunday participation would be important. There will be occasions when events/programming take place outside of standard business or Sunday morning hours.

For more information, please contact: Eric Dupee at eric@god-sacre.org or (203)966-2651, x2.



Missions & Outreach: Christmas in July (and June and August)

When we look for places to serve the homeless on Thanksgiving and Christmas, the refrain is always the same: "Call me in July!" Summer is the time the shelters fall short of volunteers, so if you're local and willing, please consider helping out with our homeless meal service.



Open Door Shelter Lunch Service Tuesdays June 26, July 24, August 28, 11:15am-2:00pm: Help set up and assist the chef and serve lunch to the Norwalk homeless community. For 16 and older. For more details or to signup, please email Stephanie Radman at stephanieradman@aol.com.

Pacific House Dinner Service Thursdays June 21, July 19, August 16, 4:30pm-7:00pm: Make, buy, and/or transport and serve dinner to the homeless men in Stamford. Great family service. For more details or to signup email Suzanne Brannan at suzbrannan1@mac.com.

"For the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever."
Psalm 9:18



Trustee Update

The Trustees have decided to periodically provide updates on what we are working on, with the hope of



making the Board, as well as our mission, a little more visible and transparent to the Congregation. (So look for us wearing "Trustee" name tags at upcoming Services and at the Celebration Sunday picnic!)

As you probably know, one of the primary responsibilities of the Trustees is to ensure the Church is properly funded. While that certainly includes the day to day operations, it also means maintaining this historic property on God's Acre.

Did you know the windows in the Meeting House are 175 years old, yet have never been significantly repaired? They are large, wooden, double-hung windows and contain 60 panes of glass per window.

So, beginning June, work will begin to restore these windows. Our Building and Grounds Ministry Team has done a great job locating just the right contractor to lovingly repair these historical treasures. On a rotating basis, the eight windows will be removed, dipped and stripped, and the glass removed and repaired. When they are reassembled and rehung, they will open and close properly. And will hopefully last for the "next" 175 years! The intent is to have all restoration work complete by Kick-off Sunday in the early Fall.



Lastly, a reminder that the 2018 Stewardship campaign officially closes in June. If you have not yet pledged, we prayerfully ask you to consider doing so.

Respectfully,

Stephanie Douglas-Parkin, Chair of Trustees

Work on the windows in the Meeting House will begin in June.

Music Ministries

Chancel Choir Recognition Sunday Sunday, June 3

At the 10:00am worship service, the Chancel Choir members will be recognized. The Chancel Choir rehearses weekly over nine months a year and sings nearly every Sunday in the worship services. They are Antonio Abate, Diana Benton, Mary Lou Cantrell, Regina Ceragioli, Stephen Clark, Kathryn Crum, Jenny D'Alba, Robin Foley, Carol Friedland, Margery Gardner, William Gardner, Tammie Garner, Juliet Howe, Paul Howes, Kathleen Ireland, Dimitrie Lazich, Phyllis Linden, Betsy Magratten, Jesse Malgieri, Anne Maguire, Marie-Ange Masters, Ruth Morgan, Tereza Nemessanyi, Marianne Perry, William Picard, Stephanie Polonio, Andrea Ritter, Aram Tchobanian, Pat Thatcher, and Paul Toldalagi.

Thank You

Thank you to Ms. Noëlle, who directed our children's choirs, nativity pageants, and musicals for the past three years. You are loved and will be missed.

Thank You to the musicians who sang and played instruments this year in our services. Your talents and time devoted to church music has been an inspiration, blessing, and joy to all. Thank you to parents who transported their children weekly to children's choir rehearsals and to sing on Sundays. The theology of the church is presented through music so children received Biblical stories with God's love each week.



Farewell from Ms. Noelle, continued

These experiences will help shape my next journey in London. Although I won't be working for a church, I take with me your love, energy, and this experience as I continue to teach children music. I've battled constantly between choosing a performing career and teaching. Working here with this congregation has quieted my conflicting thoughts, I know now exactly what God has called me to do. He gave me a most wonderful gift: a voice to sing, to entertain, to move. It is a gift I cherish, but He's shown me that my calling is to use my voice to teach. I thank God every day for the blessing of this job.

I will miss New Canaan and this church, I will miss Wednesdays and Sundays. I am both elated and scared to leave but Deuteronomy 31:8 reminds us: "Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; He will neither fail you nor abandon you." I'm moving across the ocean knowing the people of this church send with me love, prayer and support. I thank each and every child who gave me the chance to share music with them. I thank the parents who trusted in my leadership. I thank the staff- most especially Jody Davis for shaping me into the teacher I am today.

Farewell and many blessings, and I hope we cross paths again very soon!

Yours in Christ

Noëlle

Plan Ahead for Fall!

Make space in your fall schedule to join one of our choirs!

Thursdays, beginning September 6

Chancel Choir: 7:30 – 9:00pm

For all singers high school - adults

Mondays, beginning September 10

Cherub Choir: 4:00 – 4:30pm

For children ages 4 – 6

Grace Notes: 4:30 – 5:00pm

For children ages 2 and 3, with a parent

Wednesdays, beginning September 12

Spirit Singers: 4:00 – 5:00pm

For children in grades 1-4

Joyful Noise: 5:00 – 6:00pm

For young people in grades 5 - 8

Sonshine Singers: 6:00-6:45pm

For boys grades 1-8

For more information please contact Jody Blaine Davis at music@godsacre.org or (203)966-2651, x4 or visit our website, www.godsacre.org.

We had a faith-filled year of fun in Youth Ministries!



Thank you to all who made this year incredible, especially to our dedicated ministry teams!

On the Horizon for Youth Ministries:

Rising Seniors please save the date for your Senior Retreat! Thursday, August 9 - Saturday, August 11 we'll be heading to Charlemont, Massachusetts for camping and whitewater rafting.

Rising freshmen and seniors, save the date for our Senior/Freshman retreat to New York City this October. We will continue our long-term partnership with YSOP to serve among the boroughs of Manhattan alongside our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. The dates for the retreat to New York City are Friday, October 26 - Saturday, October 27, 2018.

Beacon of Light

Sunday, June 3, 5:00-7:30pm
Dinner and Worship

More details and RSVP at:
www.godsacre.org/beaconoflight

\$20 per person; \$10/children 10 and under
\$75/family of four



*Submissions for the September Newsletter are due August 20.
Email submissions to office@godsacre.org.*

Be sure to connect@God's Acre this summer!

*Worship Services continue at 8:00am in the Memorial Garden
and 10:00am in the Meeting House throughout the summer.*

Summer Preachers, Soloists, and Guest Pianists:

June 10: Celebration Sunday
Stephen Clark, soloist (8:00am only)

June 17: Rev. Dr. Chapin Garner, preaching
Scott Mesh, percussion; Jenny d'Alba, soloist

June 24: Caroline Ainsworth Hughes, preaching
Soloist to be announced

July 1: Rev. Eric Dupee, preaching
Soloist to be announced

July 8: Marianna Kilbride, preaching
Antonio Abate, soloist; Nancy Upton, pianist

July 15: Rev. Dr. Chapin Garner, preaching
Antonio Abate, soloist

July 22: Rev. Eric Dupee, preaching
Antonio Abate, soloist; Paul Schmidt, pianist

July 29: Rev. Dr. Chapin Garner, preaching
Antonio Abate, soloist

August 5: Rev. Dr. Chapin Garner, preaching
Soloist to be announced

August 12: Rev. Eric Dupee, preaching
Soloist to be announced

August 19: Rev. Eric Dupee, preaching
Kathryn Crum, soloist

August 26: Rev. Dr. Chapin Garner, preaching
Anne Maguire, soloist; Nancy Upton, pianist

September 2: Rev. Eric Dupee, preaching
Anne Maguire, soloist

Our Church Community

Ministers

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

The Rev. Eric M. Dupee, x2
Minister of Christian Formation

The Rev. Chris Tate, x829
Transitional Director of Children's Formation

Staff

Laurel Carr, x833
Christian Formation Coordinator

Debbie Chapman, x831
Pastoral Care Coordinator

Dr. Jo Deen Blaine Davis, x4
Director of Music Ministries

Morgan Flagg, x834
Youth Director

Noëlle Francis, x821
Director of Children's Music and Drama

Anthony Jones
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, x832
Director of Missions & Outreach

Caroline Leather, x835
Assistant Director of Children's Formation

Kelly Leather, x824
Senior Youth Director

Marie-Ange Masters, x823
Director of Accounting

Kelly Morrissey, x822
Chief Administrative Officer

Beth Picard, x839
Administrative Assistant

Church Lay Leadership

Stephanie Douglas-Parkin
Chair, Board of Trustees

Mark Tedford
Chair, Board of Deacons

Doug Raymond
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Kathy Dinnie
Chair, Personnel



The Congregational Church
of New Canaan

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WE ARE A STEPHEN MINISTRY CHURCH