

From the Pastor's Study

Sisters and Brothers,

This fall I'm taking the UCC Polity course at Yale. That means I'm learning a lot about the history of the four Christian denominations that comprise the United Church of Christ. Recently, the class took a tour of downtown New Haven and the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale. Edwards may be best known for his classic must-read sermon titled: *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*.

It was interesting to learn that the green at the center of New Haven was the Congregationalists' settlement when they first arrived in the area. They placed the original meeting house in the center of the green symbolizing the centrality of Jesus Christ in the development of their community.

In my first reflection paper, due in a few days, I'm being required to frame out a provisional definition of the UCC and what it means to minister in it. I don't know exactly how I will define the UCC. I suspect it will come together at the last minute. However, the assignment has me reflecting on the fact that the Jesus movement in the book of Acts is often referred to as "the Way" (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 24:14). That term may stem from what Jesus said to Thomas: Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).



In order to do anything, one needs a way to do it. One needs a way to grow in faith or to put one's faith into action. In my reflection paper, I may suggest the UCC denomination is "a way" to establish a community in which people can live out their faith in worship and service. I don't believe it is a perfect way. Every denomination has its strengths and weaknesses. It is not a way that appeals to all people, but it is a way that emphasizes following Jesus as faithfully as possible. It is a way that also emphasizes being open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

This church year, through the production of our "*Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know*" booklet and our expansion of men's and women's small groups, we are exploring "a way" to assist our church members in growing in faith and serving God. By reading and reflecting on the Bible story for each Sunday, you can engage in faith formation even if you can't be with us on Sunday morning.

We hope you will take advantage of the booklet and give weekly devotional time a chance. I also encourage you to join us for worship when possible.

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For over 280 years, we have gathered as a family of God's children in order to experience His presence, learn Christ's ways, and serve our neighbors – all to make faith a way of life.



From the Pastor's Study

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We're planning to do some fun things with the Bible stories through preaching, song and maybe even some drama. I'm really looking forward to this year. Please make a point to participate as much as you can. Each of our four Bible studies always welcomes new people.

We don't know if we have landed yet on the ideal way to be church together. However, I think the way we have chosen to move forward this year is pretty darn exciting and I'm happy to be on the journey of faith with each of you.

Blessings,
Eric

Grab your book at church or online @
godsacre.org/blog



Bible
top 40†

Bible Stories
Everyone Should Know



The Congregational Church
of New Canaan

Trustee Update

After the summer, the Trustees have reconvened and are working on the business of the church for the new program year. Hopefully, you have seen the recent progress in the restoration of our historic church. Four of the eight windows in the Meeting House have been repaired and rehung, with the remaining work scheduled for next summer. Also, there are new columns and a fresh coat of paint on the exterior of the front facade.

The annual stewardship campaign will kick-off shortly. As you consider your pledging for 2019, please remember that:

“We are judged by what we do, and only in doing can we give example. Christians practice stewardship by sharing with those in need their God given time, talents and money, as an act of thanks to God for all His gifts to them.” [From Stewardship, October 2005]

Finally, in lieu of a Fall Special Meeting, the Trustees will host a mid-hour on Sunday, November 4th, at 9:00am in the Chapel to share the proposed 2019 budget, and to answer any questions you may have. (Note that the annual meeting will be held, as usual, in March.)

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me, or any other Trustee, should you have questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Douglas-Parkin, Chair of Trustees

Interested in Joining Our Church?

We love to welcome new members into our congregation and hold two Membership Sundays a year, in the Fall and Spring.

Our next class will meet as follows:

10/21 – Welcome Social, 4:00-6:00pm, Parsonage

10/28 – Session #1, 8:30-9:45am, Church Parlor

11/04 – Session #2, 8:30-9:45am, Church Parlor

11/11 – Session #3, 8:30-9:45am, Church Parlor

11/11 – Saturday Social Event, 4:00-6:00pm

11/18 – Membership Sunday at the 10:00am Worship Service

To inquire or join the class, please contact:

Amy Sheffield

amysheff@me.com

(203) 594-7326

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

Adult Christian Formation Fall Offerings

New YDS Study: The Book of John with William Picard & Diana Beecher

Our Yale Divinity School Bible study on the Book of John is being offered in our Monday morning class and Tuesday Women's Group class and is underway. The Gospel of John contains some of our the most loved stories of Jesus and accessing the Yale Bible Study materials will help you get the most out of each session. Come to one of our small groups and not only will you be able to engage in fabulous, thoughtful conversation, you will also be engaging in a wonderful fellowship opportunity with your church peers. It's not too late! New members and all knowledge levels are always welcome! Materials are available on our website: www.godsacre.org. Click on "Learn and Grow" then scroll down to Yale Bible Study.

- Group discussion opportunities are offered weekly:
 - Mondays at 6:30am in the library
 - Tuesday at 9:30am (Women's Group) in the parlor.
- Contact Laurel Carr to sign up or for more information: laurel@godsacre.org, (203)966-2651 x833

Sunday Morning: Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know

with Reverend Eric Dupee and BJ Flag

If you attended any of our Beginner Bible Study sessions in the spring, you will feel right at home in this study. We are inviting all church members to use the *Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know* booklet, to have family discussion or personal reflection on 40 of the most important Bible stories. If you need background on the story, insight into its meaning or thoughts on how it might apply to our lives today, this study is for you! This study is underway. Just drop in when you can. Come to the parlor for 9:00 – 9:45am and be ready for conversation.

Contact Eric for more information and to sign up:
eric@godsacre.org.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study with Chapin

This Bible Study is an exploration of the scriptures that Chapin and Eric will be preaching on Sundays in the coming weeks. This year, it will include the *Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know*. This is not a lecture, but a conversation that helps our preachers form the themes and directions of their sermons. Sessions begin in the Parlor at 9:30 and end promptly at 11:00am each Wednesday. If you are interested in or have a passion for the bible, and if you are willing to be honest with your thoughts and opinions - this study may be for you!

Contact Chapin for more information and to sign up:
chapin@godsacre.org.

Fellowship Mystery!

Saturday,
October 27
@7:00pm

Who doesn't love a good mystery?

On Saturday, October 27 at 7:00pm, we are cooking up our own version of "Fellowship Mystery."

Are you curious yet?



Here's how it works:

First, you must decide if you prefer being a guest or a host. Being a guest is simple. Sign up, be willing to bring a side dish or two, work up an appetite, and show up at the address given to you. Being a host requires a little more effort. You agree to host a meal in your home for a set number of guests, say 8. Then you wait and see who shows up at the door. It's all great fun and a wonderful way to get to know others in our church family.

Registration ends October 15th...so don't be late!

RSVP to the invite in your inbox or email:
laurel@godsacre.org

A few important details:

- If you commit to come, PLEASE COME!
- We don't want our hosts and hostesses to prepare for a full house and then get a bunch of no-shows!
- Respect your host's time and don't wear out your welcome.
- Guests will be given directions to their dinner destination, what to bring and what time to arrive.
- Hosts will be given the number of guests to expect and information about food allergies. Please indicate if you have any allergies when you RSVP.

Save the Date - Faith and Finance

Join us on November 4 at 9:00am in the Chapel for a mid-hour conversation about faith and giving and a review of the 2019 proposed budget

Youth Christian Formation

3rd and 4th Grades to Celebrate Spiritual Milestones this month!

On Sunday, October 7th we invite all 3rd graders to join us to learn about their new manual for life- the bible! We will be hosting a "Bible Extravaganza," learning about the bible through music, games, and group discussion! This will prepare the 3rd grade class to receive bibles from the church on Sunday, October 14th.

4th graders will be preparing for their Introductory Communion on November 4th during the 10:00am Worship Service. A communion workshop will be held on Sunday, October 28th during church school.

We hope to see you there!

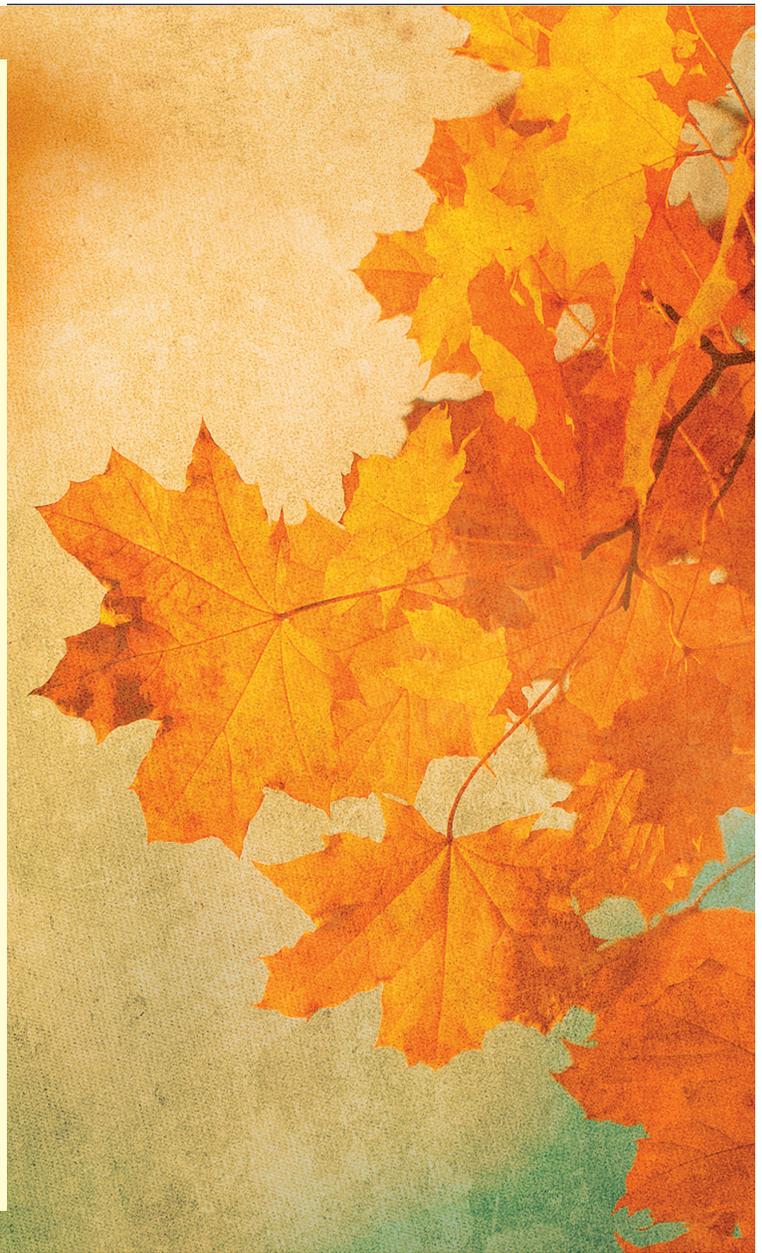
Grades 5th-7th Service Opportunity: Sneaker Party!

Join us for a Sneaker Party in the Parlor
Sunday, October 7th from 11:00-12:00pm

Come join the fun for a good cause! Light lunch will be provided as we sort and wrap the sneaker collection to benefit children at Inspirica in Stamford!

It's Turkey Bank Time!

Bring your Thanksgiving Service Project banks in each Sunday as we strive to reach our goal of \$1,000!



The Children's Music

Hello, it's so great to be here and I love getting to know everyone!

The children are singing this month,
so please listen for our children's choirs on:

Oct. 7th and Oct. 14th

Please consider having your child join a choir:

Spirit Singers

(Grades 1-4): Wednesdays 4-5

Joyful Noise

(Grades 4-8): Wednesdays 5-6

Sonshine Singers

(Boys Grades 1-8): Sundays 11:15-11:45



There will be NO CHOIR
on Halloween, Wednesday,
October 31st!



Christmas Pageant News

- Casting packets will be given out on Sunday, October 14th.
- ALL casting packets need to be returned by Sunday, October 21st.
- Casting will be on the Children's Music bulletin board on Sunday, October 28th by 9:30am.

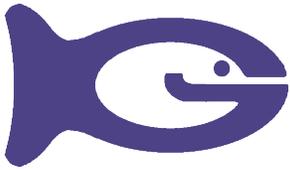
God's Blessings!

-Mrs. Mya

Youth Ministries Update



Minnows will meet for our second meeting of this program year on Tuesday, October 16th. If you joined our church when your children were infants in hopes that they would one day join youth group, now is their opportunity to begin! All 1st and 2nd graders are welcome to join as we explore our faith and build upon the lessons learned in church school.



Guppies will have our first service project of the year with JYG on Thursday, October 18th from 4:00-6:00pm. We will take a bus to the Carver Center in Norwalk and paint pumpkins with their after school program. This is a favorite event – don't miss it!



JYG will be heading to Rock Climb of Fairfield on Thursday, October 25th from 3:45-7:00pm. Join us for this fun fellowship event as we climb high to the sky! Check your e-mail for the registration link!



The Middle School Youth Group (MSYG) parent meeting took place mid-September. If you missed this meeting please e-mail Morgan Flagg at Morgan@godsacre.org to set up a separate time to meet.



Youth Group (YG) will hold its annual parents meeting on October 7 at 7:00pm in the Meeting House. This event runs concurrently to an event for the high schoolers and is the best way to find out more about our community of faith and fellowship and the only way to get the paperwork for our February Mission Trip.

Our community is inclusive of all youth, of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation or gender expression.



The Mighty Minnows are excited to kick off another year of Youth Group!

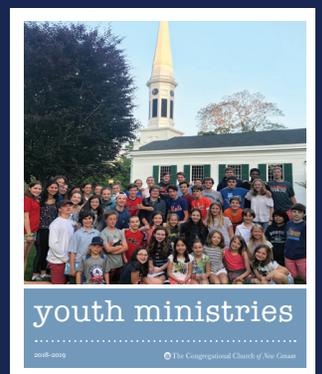


YG Seniors welcome underclassmen during our Kick-off Carnival this September!

Our entire Youth Ministries staff and parent ministry teams look forward to spending time with parents this month.

See you on
God's Acre!

October is still early in the year of all of our programs, if you haven't tried youth group out yet – come!



Choir News



Pivot House Men's Chorus

Sunday, October 14

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 who have drug and/or 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. Their two locations are in Norwalk and Bridgeport. The Men's Chorus was established several years ago as a way to help talented men heal through music. The chorus has recorded several CD's 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.

Sing during Advent with the Chancel Choir

If you would like to sing with the Chancel Choir but have limited time, consider singing in the December services! There's a place for you! Come Thursday evenings, from 7:30 – 8:00pm for quick rehearsals for the Advent season. You will sit next to a helpful singer who will guide you along the way.

Sunday, December 2 at 10:00am
Advent anthems

Sunday, December 9 at 10:00am
Stroope's "Hodie" with brass, organ,
and percussion

Sunday, December 16 at 10:00am
Advent anthems

Sunday, December 16 at 5:00pm
A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 23 at 10:00am
Christmas anthems with harp



Save the Date!

Tune In . . . to Music

Wednesday, November 7, 11:15am

Jody Blaine Davis talks about repertoire in her upcoming organ recital. Complimentary lunch follows.

Friday, November 9, 7:00pm

Our own Jody Blaine Davis will present an organ recital with a reception following. All are invited and invite your friends too. This is free and open to the public. Childcare provided.



Remember Weekly Choir Rehearsals

Sing Unto the Lord a New Song!

- **Mondays**
 - Cherub Choir from 4:00 – 4:30pm, ages 4 – K.
 - Grace Notes from 4:30 – 5:00pm, ages 2 & 3 and parents.
- **Wednesdays**
 - Spirit Singers from 4:00 – 5:00pm, grades 1-4.
 - Joyful Noise from 5:00 – 6:00pm, grades 4 - 8.
 - Sonshine Singers has moved from Wednesday afternoons to Sunday mornings, below.*
- **Thursdays**
 - Chancel Choir from 7:30 – 9:00pm, high school through adults
- **Sundays**
 - Sonshine Singers from 11:15 – 11:45am,
 - BOYS from grades 1-7

For more information contact:

Jody Blaine Davis, music@godsacre.org,
(203)966-2651 #4

or

Mya Gill, mya@godsacre.org
(203)966-2651 #21.

PMLT is presenting a two-part series

Planning for The End: A Beginning

Part One Presenters:

Staying Put and The Congregational Church

A Panel on End-of-Life Planning: Guidance in Starting a Conversation about End-of-Life Wishes

Sunday, October 28, 11:30am

Parlor

- Light refreshments
- Child care provided
- Adults only. Must be over 18 years old to attend
- Walk-ins are welcome but RSVP's would be appreciated

Everyone knows that at some point their physical life on earth will end. What kind of death would you like to have? Will your survivors know your wishes? In the midst of their grief, will they be struggling to find out crucial information? Often we put off planning for death indefinitely because we are "not old yet." Or we just are uncomfortable thinking about it. But it's something that every adult needs to think about!

The panel will provide guidance to parents and their adult children on how to orchestrate a family conversation which ensures that final wishes will be honored, and will outline the purpose of various legal and medical directives, as well as options for end-of-life care. Real life stories will be shared.

Panelists will include:

Kristin Edwards, M.D., Yale-New Haven Health
Staying Put Advisory Council Member Pat Stoddard
The Rev. Chapin Garner,

Program moderator:

Barbara Achenbaum, Executive Director of Staying Put

Contact Debbie Chapman in the church office:

Debbie@godsacre.org,
(203) 966-2651 ext 831

Noble House Sober Living Space Workday!

It's not too late to join us!
Saturday, October 6 at 9:00am

Meet in the church front circle

Contact Marianna@godsacre.org for details

Moment for Missions

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not
be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.
Isaiah 40:31

Noble House - Sober Living Space Workday

October 6, 9am

Meet in the church circle at 9am sharp
for Bridgeport and return home by 2pm.
A willingness to serve is the only skill
required. Wear sloppy clothes, sturdy
shoes, and bring work gloves, hat and
goggles if you have on hand.

Sign-up or more information:

Marianna Kilbride
marianna@godsacre.org



Celebrate the Grand Opening of The Barn

Partially Funded and Rehabbed by MSA & CCNC Volunteers

Stephanie Joyce's Art Ministry Showing

October 20, 1 - 3pm

1546 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605

Enter driveway from Hancock Avenue

RSVP by OCTOBER 15

Queenie

(203) 414-5477

reentry_ministry@sbcglobal.net

- Barn Tours
Fellowship, Refreshments
- *Re-Entry Ministry*
Renew Restore Rescue
- Music & Singing by MICHAEL BROWN



Pacific House Dinner Service

Thursday, October 18
4:30pm

Open Door Lunch Service

Tuesday, October 23
11:15am

Contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org

Our Church Community

Ministers

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

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

Staff

Laurel Carr, x833
Program Manager

Debbie Chapman, x831
Pastoral Care Coordinator

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

Morgan Flagg, x834
Youth Director

Mya Gill, 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

Debbie Raymond, x837
Christian Formation Coordinator

Church Lay Leadership

Stephanie Douglas-Parkin
Chair, Board of Trustees

Mark Tedford
Chair, Board of Deacons

Doug Raymond
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Kathie Dinnie
Chair, Personnel

Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the November Newsletter, please submit by October 19th.

Email submissions to:
Laurel Carr
laurel@godsacre.org.

my connect 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
2. Go to 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 marie-ange@godsacre.org

 The Congregational Church
of New Canaan

23 Park Street
New Canaan, CT 06840
(203)966-2651
www.godsacre.org

We are a Stephen Minister Church