

# news @ GOD'S ACRE

## From the Pastor's Study

Dear Church Family,

A little over a month ago on Kick-off Sunday, we began encouraging you to carve out some Sabbath time for yourselves and/or your family to eat, pray, and engage in a little faith formation together. We have provided you with a study guide for the entire year filled with Bible stories we think everyone should know. We suggested setting aside time on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:00pm [between MSYG and YG] to share a Sabbath meal together. During this time, you would talk about things you are thankful to God for and read and discuss the Bible story for the day. This practice is our attempt to support one another in maintaining more balanced lives and to encourage more faithful ways of living and interacting with one another. At the end of September, we modeled a Sabbath dinner in Smith Hall where we shared a delicious meal, read bible stories, discussed these stories, prayed together, and even sang together — 170 members and friends of our community joined in our Sabbath meal with the intent of starting a new tradition in our respective households.

So.... how is it going?



This is about the time when best intentions begin to be tested. Perhaps you believe in having some Sabbath time and engaging in a bit of Christian education at home but it can be a difficult discipline to maintain. Particularly in the first couple of months.

My family observed a time of Sabbath each week for ten years before arriving in New Canaan, and has struggled to get back in the rhythm of this sacred practice. First, we are missing Sam, who is off to college and who really encouraged our Sabbath observance. Second, we have had so many church activities happening, (a number of them at the parsonage) that we haven't been able to host an open table yet. Additionally, while we have observed a Sabbath meal of sorts each week, these special evenings seem to sneak up on us and we never feel quite as well prepared for them as we would like.

For my family the issue is simple, we had gotten out of the habit and it is taking us a while to reclaim the joy of Sabbath practice. We know that three months from now, if we stay committed (even if our attempts between now and then are less than ideal) our Sabbath keeping will feel natural again. It won't feel like work, and we will truly begin to pleasantly anticipate our Sunday evening meals.

*Continued on page two*



The Congregational Church of New Canaan

## From the Pastor's Study

*Continued from page one*

I have loved seeing some of the photos you have sent in that have been taken during your Sabbath meals. It has been a delight to hear about people opening their tables to members of our community who want to celebrate Sabbath meals together. Even MG offered a version of a Sabbath dinner after our annual golf outing at Silvermine!

Sabbath keeping isn't easy. Even setting aside an hour and a half once a week to gather for dinner can seem like a tall order when our lives are so busy. But Sabbath is essential for spiritual and relational health. Sabbath is commanded by God. Somehow keeping Sabbath *keeps us* healthy, happy, and focused on what is most important: family, friends, and our Lord.

Keep up the good work!

Yours in Christ,

Chapin

Grab your book at church or online @  
[godsacred.org/blog](http://godsacred.org/blog)

## Bible top 40<sup>†</sup>

Bible Stories  
Everyone Should Know



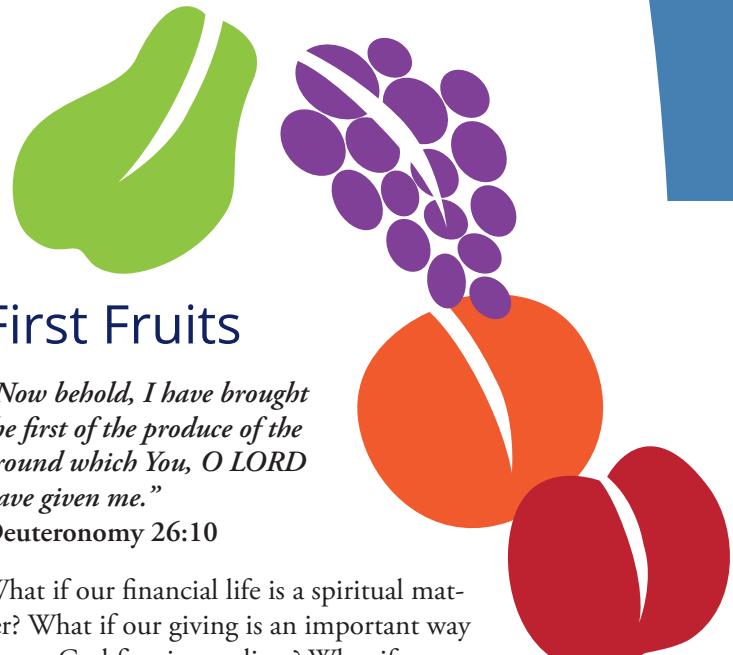
The Congregational Church  
of New Canaan

## Faith and Finance

*"Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder which you do not require is needed by others. The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. Those who retain what is superfluous possess the goods of others."* [St. Augustine]

**Save the date, Sunday,**

**November 4:** the Trustees will host a Faith and Finance mid-hour at 9:00am in the Chapel where they will review the Proposed 2019 budget, and will be available to answer any questions you may have. As always, the final 2019 budget will be voted in at the Annual Meeting in March.



## First Fruits

*"Now behold, I have brought the first of the produce of the ground which You, O LORD have given me."*

Deuteronomy 26:10

What if our financial life is a spiritual matter? What if our giving is an important way to put God first in our lives? What if you put your giving to the church at the top of the list instead of the bottom?

We believe we grow in faith through giving of our first fruits to the church. Our engagement in God's work on God's Acre and in the larger community would not be possible without your financial support. Therefore, we invite you to give of your First Fruits by making a 2019 Stewardship Pledge. Look for materials in your mail in the coming week!

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

# Adult Christian Formation November 2018 and Advent Offerings

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

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! Come to the library for 9:00 – 9:45am each Sunday in November and be ready for conversation. Contact Eric for more information and to sign up at [eric@godsacre.org](mailto:eric@godsacre.org).



## Yale Divinity School Bible Study

Enjoy a Bible study with informational materials provided by world class scholars in a small group setting right in your church! Weekly preparation is helpful but not necessary.

### The Book of John

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. Drop in on a Monday or Tuesday in November to one of our small groups. 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.

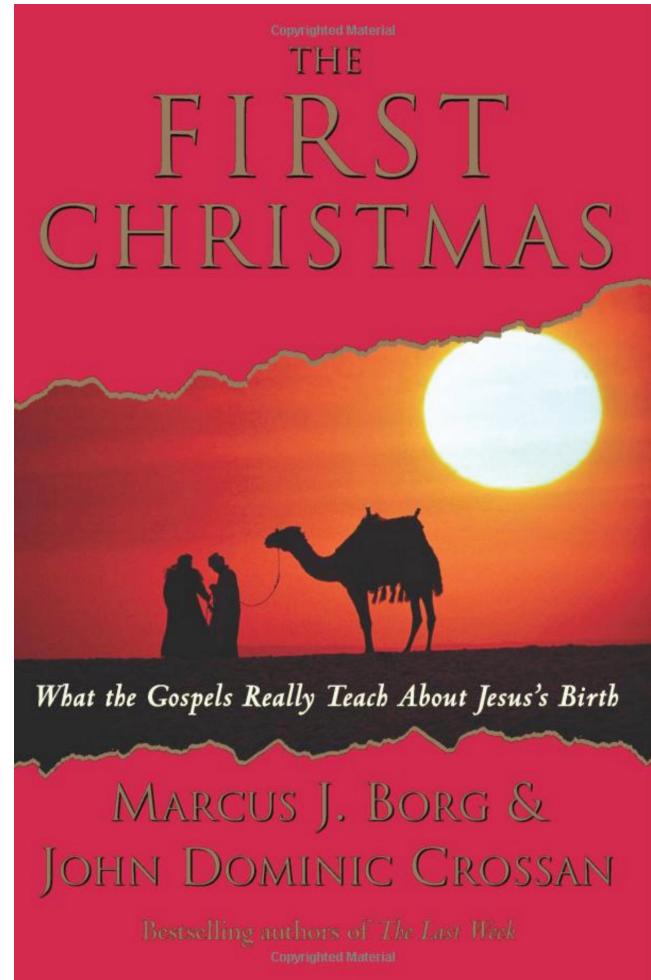
- 6:30am Monday in the Library  
*led by Diana Beecher and William Picard*
- 9:30am Tuesday Women's Study in the Parlor  
*led by Diana Beecher and Allison Mangas*

Materials are available on our website at [www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org) (click on “Learn and Grow” then scroll down to Yale Bible Study).

Group discussion opportunities are offered weekly. Just show up! New members and all knowledge levels are always welcome! Contact Laurel Carr at [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org) or (203)966-2651 x833 to sign up or for more information.

## 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 a conversation that helps our preachers form the themes and directions of their sermons. Sessions begin in the Parlor at 9:30am 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! Please contact Chapin directly for more information and to sign up at [chapin@godsacre.org](mailto:chapin@godsacre.org).



## Advent 2018

*The First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Birth* by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan

Eric will lead a book discussion on December 2, 9, 16, and 23 from 9:00-9:45am in the Parlor. **Get your copy now and read the first chapter prior to December 2!**

In *The First Christmas*, two Jesus scholars explore the beginning of the life of Christ by peeling away the sentimentalism that has built up over the last two thousand years around the most well-known of all stories. What unique contribution does each of the four Gospels make to our celebration of Christmas? The authors help us to see this well-known narrative afresh by answering the question, “What do these stories mean?” in the context of both the first century and the twenty-first century. They show that the Christmas story is far richer and more challenging than people imagine.

# All-Church Thanksgiving Service Project

**Sunday, November 18, 1:00-2:30pm**

Every year our church provides all the fixings for Thanksgiving dinner for 140 families. It's a big project and groups of all ages take part to make it a success! First, MSA agrees to designate funds for the purchase of turkeys which Walter Stewart's kindly provides at cost! Next, Church School collects funds in their Turkey Banks for canned goods, all are welcome to contribute.

The goal this year is \$1,500. The Children and Family Ministry Team orchestrates the purchase of canned goods for family baskets and large quantities for shelters. Youth Groups get into the action by assembling and donating hot cocoa jars (Guppies) and cookie mix jars (JYG).



**Everyone is welcome to join the effort!**

Questions? Want to know how to participate? Contact Caroline Leather at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org) or Marianna Kilbride at [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org).

## Church School Volunteers Needed!

Church School is in need of helping hands in our classrooms! Assisting the lead teacher, volunteers will provide an extra pair of hands & a smile to make Church School a fun & safe environment for all. Contact Caroline Leather at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org) if interested.

## The Day of at Mission Central

On November 18, Smith Hall will be a sea of boxing, wrapping, and laughing congregants.

### The schedule is:

**1:00pm** - An all-church effort, led by the Children and Family Ministry Team will decorate, fill and tie up boxes for 140 families in need. **All are welcome to come and help!**

**2:30pm** - Turkeys are delivered and offloaded by our strongest congregants.

**4:00pm** - MSYG Advisors meet and set up for their group.

**4:30pm** - MSYG packs and makes cards for the shelter boxes which will feed another 700 people on Thanksgiving.

**6:30pm** - YG Advisors arrive on the scene.

**7:00pm** - YG descends on Smith Hall, parents in tow as drivers, to load and deliver EVERYTHING to our outposts: Inspirica, Pacific House, and Liberation House in Stamford; Macedonia Church, Grace Baptist Church, George Washington Carver Center, Mid-Fairfield Aids Project, Open Door Shelter in Norwalk; Pivot Ministries in Bridgeport; and Person to Person in Darien. In each location, YG is treated to an overview of the good work done there.

## Turkey Banks are collected every Sunday!

Thanksgiving Service Project- November 18th, 1:00pm

We are striving to raise \$1,500 for this year's Thanksgiving Service Project! As we drive to reach our goal we are encouraging the children to EARN their donations on their own to help feed over 140 families! The more money we raise the more food we can provide for our neighbors in need.

## The Children's Music Corner

Hello everyone!

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

- November 4 and November 18
- ALL CHILDREN'S CHOIRS will be singing Christmas Carols at the New Canaan Inn on Wednesday, December 5 (drop off and pick up is at church at 4:00pm and 6:00pm).



Our very own Mrs. Jody has a recital at the church on Friday, November 9! All choirs and their parents are invited for dinner at Vicolos Pizza restaurant at 5:30pm (next to the Fire Station, 62 Main St.) after which we will go back to the church for the recital. Pick up is at the church at 8:15pm.

**There will be NO CHOIR on  
Wednesday, November 21st or  
Sunday, November 25th**

## Christmas Pageant News

- Christmas Pageant Parents will meet in the Chapel on Sunday, November 4th directly after church from 11:00-11:15am
- For the 2018 Rehearsal Schedule, please contact: [mya@godsacre.org](mailto:mya@godsacre.org)

**Please consider having your child join a choir:**

### Spirit Singers

(Grades 1-4): Wednesdays 4:00pm-5:00pm

### Joyful Noise

(Grades 4-8): Wednesdays 5:00pm-6:00pm

### Sonshine Singers

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

God's Blessings!

-Mrs. Mya

# Youth Ministries Update

November gives us time to pause and be grateful during this beautiful season. Join our Youth Groups this month as we give thanks to God and give of our blessings to others!

We begin this month with grateful hearts for the incredible weekend of service we had in NYC for our annual Senior/Freshman retreat. Our longtime partner Youth Service Opportunities Project (YSOP) once again welcomed our youth with open arms and in doing so opened their eyes and hearts to the needs of the hungry and homeless across the New York boroughs. Twenty-two high schoolers answered the charge to see Christ in others and be



Christ to others and served with compassion and grace. To ensure that our freshmen and seniors were well bonded before returning home they were challenged to "Escape the Room" together for some extra fun and fellowship!



## Save the Date to participate in our All Church Thanksgiving Service Project!



Guppies: Thurs., Nov. 8th 4:00-5:00pm -  
Guppies will be creating hot cocoa containers



JYG: Thurs., Nov. 8th 5:15-6:30pm -  
JYG will pack cookie mix in jars – yum!



MSYG: Sun., Nov. 18th 4:00-5:30pm -  
MSYG will wrap the Thanksgiving boxes



YG: Sun., Nov. 18th 7:00-9:00pm - YG will  
deliver the boxes across Fairfield County

## First Youth Worship Of The Year!

We invite all youth groups (1st-12th graders) to share a meal and worship together on Wednesday, November 14. Our giant family dinner will be held in Smith Hall at 6:30pm followed by a youth-led worship from 7:00-8:00pm in the Meeting House.



# Music News

Jody Blaine Davis,  
Organist, in Recital

Friday, November 9 at 7:00 PM  
Reception following in  
Smith Hall  
Free and Open to the Public  
Childcare provided



Our own Director of Music Ministries, Dr. Jody Blaine Davis, will perform her annual organ recital, Friday, November 9 at 7:00pm in the church. Repertoire includes a variety of music from different countries: Pachelbel, Gigout, Jongen, Sowande, and female composer Chelsea Chen. This free one-hour recital has something for everyone, so invite a friend! A reception will follow hosted by the Music Ministry Team and childcare is provided.

For more information, please contact (203)966-2651 x4 or [music@godsacre.org](mailto:music@godsacre.org).

## Tune in . . . to Music

Wednesday, November 7  
11:15am – 12:00pm  
The Meeting House

Hear Jody Blaine Davis in a casual and informative conversation about her organ recital program on Friday evening, November 9. Jody will talk about the composers whose works she will perform and then you will hear repertoire excerpts on her recital. Stay for lunch at noon, too! All are complimentary to friends of music.

## Yale Opera Scenes

Friday, November 2 and  
Saturday, November 3 at 7:30pm  
Yale University, Sprague Memorial Hall, New Haven

Hear Chancel Choir scholar and Yale opera student, Hans Tashjian, in opera scenes presented by Yale University's Opera department. Tickets (\$15 for adults and \$10 for students) may be purchased at <http://music-tickets.yale.edu>.

## Save the Date!

Sunday, December 9 at the 10:00am service  
Z. Randall Stroope's *Hodie* will be presented by the Chancel Choir. Guest conductor Scott Cranston will direct guest instrumentalists: a brass quintet, two percussionists, and organist.

Sunday, December 16 at 5:00pm  
*A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* presented by the Chancel Choir.

## 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

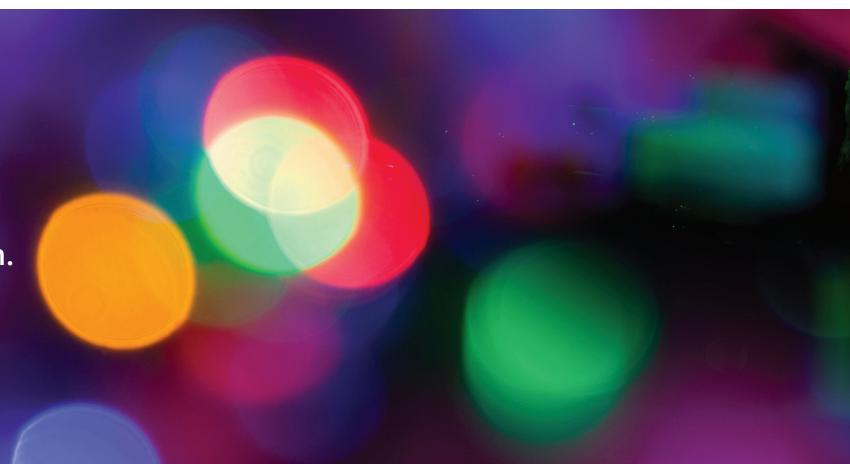
Sunday, December 16 at 5:00pm  
*A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*

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



## New this December... Advent Musical Moments

Take a break this advent season to enjoy the  
music of the season each Wednesday at noon.  
These thirty-minute "moments" will include  
music, prayer, and reflection.



# Women's Fellowship

## Cheese 101, Class & Lunch

Learn about the difference in milks, basic cheese making 101 in this fun setting. We will taste a variety of cheeses and enjoy what many call "the best grilled cheese sandwich in the area", tomato soup and water. Cost is \$20.00 per person and is limited to 10 attendees. *If demand exists, we will add another session.*

Tuesday, November 13th

11:00-12:30

Plum Plums Cheese

72 Westchester Avenue

Pound Ridge, New York

Rides are available. Questions? Stephanie Radman (203) 966-4439 or [stephanieradman@aol.com](mailto:stephanieradman@aol.com)



## Christmas Open House

Friday, December 7th

11:30pm-1:30pm

912 Weed Street, New Canaan

Lunch, desserts and beverages

Please come and enjoy fellowship and Christmas spirit with the women of the church at the home of church member Stephanie Radman.

Rides are available.

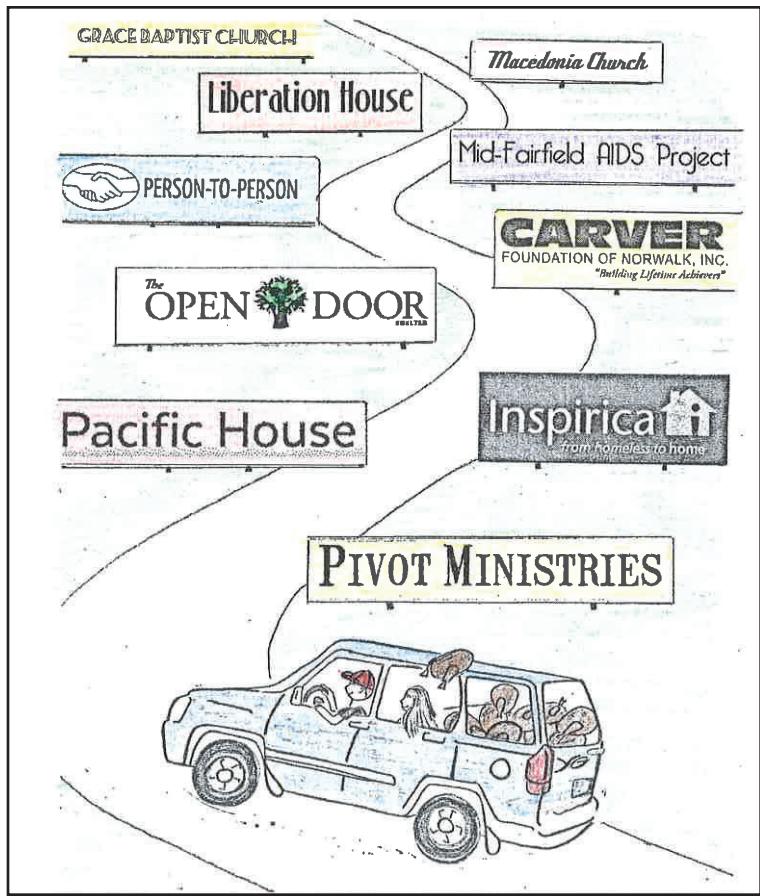
Questions? Stephanie Radman [stephanieradman@aol.com](mailto:stephanieradman@aol.com) or (203) 952-4554



SAVE THE DATE

Men's Fellowship Christmas Dinner  
December 4th

# Moment for Missions



## Turkeys from Heaven!!

Sign up to deliver turkeys and fixin's to our mission partners on Sunday November 18. Contact Marianna Kilbride [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org) or Caroline Leather [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org)



- 11/11 Angel Gift and Dove Box Kickoff
- 11/15 Pacific House Dinner Service, 4:30pm
- 11/18 All-Church Thanksgiving Project – Many Ways to Serve
- 11/20 Open Door Lunch Service, 11:15am

But he answered them,  
"You give them something to eat." Mark 6:37

# 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  
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

Avril Sweeny, x836  
Director of Pastoral Care Ministries

## 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 December Newsletter, please submit by November 19th.

Email submissions to:

Laurel Carr  
[laurel@godsacre.org](mailto: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](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 [marie-ange@godsacre.org](mailto:marie-ange@godsacre.org)

## The Congregational Church of New Canaan

23 Park Street  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
(203)966-2651  
[www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org)

*We are a Stephen Minister Church*