

news @ GOD'S ACRE

Greetings Members and Friends,

At a recent 10:00am worship service, we held the commissioning for the YG mission trip. The choir loft was filled with youth and adults who will be traveling to Mobile, Alabama in February. The contractors that will be overseeing the work joined us. The youth worship team did an awesome job leading music during the service. I invited everyone present to become a Mission Sponsor. This was my appeal:

*A preacher was in the pulpit and said, "Let the church walk."
One of the deacons of the church, Deacon Smith, was sitting in the front row.
He said, "Amen. Let it walk."
The preacher said, "Let the church run!
Deacon Smith responded, "Amen! Let it run."
The preacher said, "Now, let the church fly!"
Deacon Smith said, "Amen, Reverend, let the church fly!"
The preacher said, "Now, it's going to take money to let the church fly." Deacon Smith said, "Let it walk, Reverend. Let it walk."*

When you become a mission sponsor you figuratively and literally allow the church to fly. This year, The Congregational Church of New Canaan will fly to Mobile, Alabama. Our youth will extend the ministry of our church to another part of the country. They will enter the homes of complete strangers, listen to them, learn about their lives and share their joys and challenges.

Most of our youth have opportunities to travel, but they don't have opportunities to engage with people in their travels the way they do on a mission trip.

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From the Pastor's Study



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.

Resolve to connect @GOD'S ACRE in 2019!

Sign in to myConnect today!
www.godsacre.org/myConnect



connect
with each other



grow
in your faith



serve
your neighbor

Faith and Finance

Our 2019 stewardship commitment is a covenantal expression of gratitude and promise. Through our pledges, we express our gratitude to God for the gifts that passed freely into our hands. Let us give generously of our time, talent and treasure so that our entire community may be fed and made whole by our God.

Save the date, Sunday, March 3 – Annual Congregational Meeting

Participate in a congregational tradition – the all church Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 3 immediately following the 10:00am worship service.

This is an important congregational conversation regarding our 2019 budget and the nominations of church officers. All members are encouraged to participate.

As a reminder, 2019 stewardship pledges are due! We have had tremendous response to date, but there are still approximately 120 members/households that have not yet pledged. The Board of Trustees will be meeting on February 4 to prepare a budget for presentation at the Annual Meeting. Please submit your pledge today to express your thanks to God and if possible, consider “stepping-up” your pledge to help us properly prepare for the year ahead. Pledges may be made online at www.godsacre.org/pledge.



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.

Women’s Fellowship

Save the Date: Tuesday, March 5

Cake & Coffee Series
9:30 – 11:00am

At the home of church member, Anne Schimmeck
47 Douglas Road

Coffee and desserts will be served
Please come and enjoy fellowship with the women of the church.

Rides are available

Contact Stephanie Radman to RSVP by February 28.
(203)952-4554 or stephanieradman@aol.com



Bible Study

Paul and John in Dialogue: A Bible study with William Picard & Diana Beecher

The Book of John was the focus for the Monday Morning Bible Study and Tuesday Women's Bible Study this past fall. During that study, there were interesting connections made to Paul's New Testament letters. Through February, our Monday and Tuesday classes will explore three major themes important for both Paul and John: Dark and Light, The Holy Spirit, and the meaning of the Cross.



Paul's writings were the earliest New Testament writings. John's Gospel was the last of the four gospels to be developed. Was John influenced by Paul? How are their ideas similar and how do they differ? What does it all mean for us? The New Year is a good time to join one of these studies. You will be able to engage in fabulous, thoughtful conversation, you will also be engaging in a wonderful fellowship opportunity with your church peers.

Materials are available on our website at 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 and Tuesday at 9:30am (Women's Group) in the Parlor. New members and all knowledge levels are always welcome! Contact Laurel Carr at laurel@godsacre.org or (203)966-2651 x833 to sign up or for more information.



Sunday Morning: Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know with Eric and BJ Flagg

It's February, but it's not too late to make Bible study your New Year's resolution! Since the beginning of the church year in September, we've been 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 Parlor for 9:00- 9:45am each Sunday in February. Contact Eric for more information and to sign up at 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 9:30am 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.

Bible Study
WITH
CHAPIN

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

Music News

February is Black History Month

In observance of Black History Month, a spiritual will be included each Sunday in February.

Sing with the Chancel Choir this Lenten Season

PLAN AHEAD

If you would like to sing with the Chancel Choir but have limited time, consider singing during this Lenten season and on Easter Day. The Chancel Choir will sing Lenten anthems beginning Ash Wednesday, March 6 and Sundays beginning March 17.

The special Lenten musical presentation with guest string instrumentalists will be Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, K. 339 at the Sunday morning 10:00am service on April 7. Also, you may sing at the Palm Sunday service with trumpets on April 14; Maundy Thursday Tennebrae Service on April 18; and Easter Day on April 21 with brass and tympani. There's a place for you! Come Thursday evenings, from 7:30-8:15pm for a quick rehearsal for these occasions. You will sit next to a strong singer who will support you along the way. For more information, please contact Jody Blaine Davis at music@godsacre.org or (203)966-2651 x827.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

The Children's Music Corner

This year's Musical will be "Bible Top 5." We will focus on 5 stories out of "Bible Top 40," and act them out! The Musical will be presented on May 15 at 4:30pm, May 19 at 10:00am in the Meeting House, and May 22 at 4:30pm at the New Canaan Inn. If you are interested in being a part of the Musical, please email me at mya@odsacre.org.



God's Blessings!
-Mrs. Mya

Lenten Musical Moments

You are invited to hear our exceptional section leaders sing Lenten contemplative music. These begin Wednesday, March 13 at 12:00pm for 30 minutes in the Meeting House.

- March 13 – Antonio Abate, tenor
- March 20 – Dimitrie Lazich, baritone
- March 27 – Anne Maguire, mezzo soprano
- April 3 – Diana Benton, soprano
- April 10 – Aram Tchobanian, tenor
- April 17 – Anush Avetisyan, soprano

Did You Forget To Join A Choir?

It's not too late, join in February.

Sundays

Sonshine Singers 11:15 – 11:45am

Mondays

Cherubs 4:00 – 4:30pm

Grace Notes 4:30 – 5:00pm

Wednesdays

Spirit Singers 4:00 – 5:00pm

Joyful Noise 5:00 – 6:00pm

Thursdays

Chancel Choir 7:30 – 9:00pm



From the Pastor's Study

Continued from page one

Most of our youth have opportunities to serve locally, but they don't have an opportunity to get to know and work alongside a contractor, like they do on one of the service trips. Most of our youth engage in some form of faith development here at home, but it could be the most formative experience they will have is one of these service trips.

And it can't happen without your financial help. These youth and/or their families pay to go on these trips, but they also rely on us. Please consider some financial support. Mission sponsors contribute everything from a couple dollars to \$10,000. Mission sponsors support all the youth mission trips, including Quest, which will be going to the Holy Land in June.

In the first chapter of the book of Acts, Jesus, having risen from the dead, appeared to his disciples and said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." This is our chance to extend our ministry beyond these walls, beyond New Canaan and out into the world beyond.

I hope you will seriously consider being a Mission Sponsor for our youth this year!



Continuing on the theme of stewardship, I also want to thank everyone for making their financial pledge to fund the church's ministries in 2019. Our pledges are the lifeblood of the church. Without them we cannot engage in ministry. They represent our love of God and our desire to support God's work in the world.

Of the pledging units we have received so far, 103 have increased their pledge from last year. We have received 32 new pledges this year. I view these numbers as a sign of spiritual growth. However, we are still far behind the amount of money needed to operate the church and its ministries in 2019. We need 100% participation. If you have not filled out a pledge card or made your pledge through our church website, it is not too late! We want you to be a part of the Spirit's work here on God's acre.

Blessings,
Eric

Mission

Be Noble

February 9, 9:00am-2:00pm

Noble House is an affordable sober living home for men reentering society and the job market after completing addiction programming. Conceived by Tony Kiniry, Noble House has been partially renovated by our church and others over the last year. The third floor is beautifully completed and there is more to do! Please join us! No experience is necessary, just willing hands and hearts. Wear



sturdy shoes and bring work gloves, a hat, and goggles if you have them. Meet in the church circle at 9:00am to carpool to Bridgeport. Home by 2:00pm.

2/21/19 Pacific House Dinner Service, 4:30pm
2/26/19 Open Door Lunch Service, 11:15am

Contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org

Join us for a Pancake Sunday Sabbath Dinner!

Date: Sunday, March 3

Time: 5:30 - 7:00pm

This past fall, we had 160 people in Smith Hall for a Sunday Sabbath Meal. We introduced the *Bible Top 40: Bible Stories Everyone Should Know* booklets and encouraged our members and families to share Sabbath meals on Sunday evenings. It was a fantastic gathering! We are inviting you to a second Sabbath dinner, only this time it is a Pancake Sunday Sabbath dinner.

What is Pancake Sunday? It's a slight variation on Pancake Tuesday which also referred to as Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras in French). Pancake Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday, which marks the start of the season of Lent leading to Easter. During Lent, many Christians fast. The name Fat Tuesday refers to the last day

of indulging the senses and one's appetites prior to refraining from sweets and meats for the Lenten season. Pancake dinners, complete with bacon fat, slabs of rich butter and sweet syrup, have become a standard way of using up fats around the kitchen and having one last rich meal prior to Lent.

We're moving the pancake dinner to Sunday to make it a Sunday Sabbath meal. The purpose is still to provide a fun and tasty way to usher in the season of Lent! This Pancake Sunday Sabbath Dinner is open to all individuals and families in the church. Please RSVP to Caroline Leather at churchschool@godsacre.org.



Children & Youth Ministries

January was a busy month for our youth ministries! MSYG had their second overnight of the year during their “Winter Weekend,” where they traveled to YMCA Camp Jewell in Colebrook, CT. While there, MSYGers were able to spend invaluable time together in Christian fellowship, playing a million games, exploring all of Camp Jewell’s arts and crafts (leather making and candle making), and taking an opportunity to reflect on the Epiphany and how we might bring our gifts to Christ. Always a highlight of the year.

JYG headed out on their annual overnight to Pivot Ministries in Bridgeport, CT for an evening and morning of fun and fellowship with the men there. Our church and JYG have had a long history of partnership with Pivot Ministries. Pivot is a bible-based alcohol and drug rehabilitation facility for men. They provide their services freely to all men who come seeking help - they only ask that those men have an open heart for healing. While at Pivot, JYGers ate copious amounts of pizza with the residents there, played what must have been 100 rounds of Jenga, and heard some of the stories of the clients in how they had come to Pivot and how they had found restoration through Christ. In the morning, JYGers had an opportunity to engage in a service project to help with Pivot’s new campus. What a great trip!



Looking ahead, YG is in full-on preparation mode for their pilgrimage to Mobile, AL where 77 mission fish, 9 advisors, 5 alumni, 8 contractors, and 5 logistics personnel will be serving with Raise the Roof, an home repair ministry that we partnered with 4 years ago. Raise the Roof believes that any home repair should always start with the roof, so YGers can look forward to a lot of time tearing off old shingles and pulling nails! This is our third trip to Mobile, where we have always found incredible partners with whom we share a similar vision of Christ’s commitment to service and justice. This trip- as with anything- costs money. YG has been able to operate these faith defining and transforming trips because of the generous donations from our Mission Sponsors. We hope that you will consider being a Mission Sponsor this year. To become a mission sponsor please visit www.godsacre.org/missionsponsor2019/.



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, x827
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 March Newsletter, please
submit by February 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

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We are a Stephen Minister Church