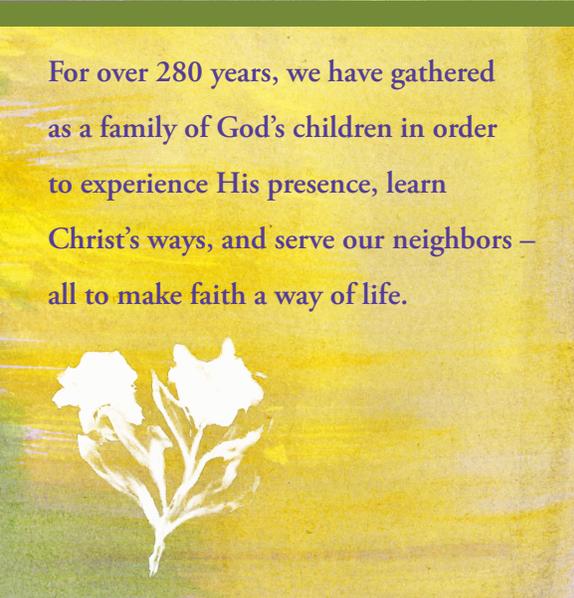




For over 280 years, we have gathered as a family of God's children in order to experience His presence, learn Christ's ways, and serve our neighbors – all to make faith a way of life.



Dear Church Family,

During the month of March, two events occur in the life of our church which I have grown to cherish. On March 3, immediately following our 10:00am service we will have our 285th Annual Meeting of The Congregational Church of New Canaan and on Wednesday, March 6 at 8:00pm during our Ash Wednesday Service, we will begin our observance of Lent. When I began serving as a minister in 1997, if you had told me that Annual Meetings and Lent would be among the highlights of my church year, I would have thought that quite unlikely. However, it has become true. I look forward to the season of Lent every year, and I love how our faith tradition gathers us to make decisions at the Annual Meeting and at other times when a Congregational Meeting is called.



**Annual Meeting** wonderfully expresses the core conviction of our Congregational tradition. We have a non-hierarchical tradition which grants equal standing to every member of our congregation. That means that everyone's voice and perspective carries the same weight. This was designed to honor the belief that there is only One in our midst with a higher standing than the rest: Jesus Christ himself — the Head of the Church. Many Congregationalists insist that they like our tradition because it is democratic — the people get to decide what the church does or does not do. But that is not only inaccurate; it is an understanding that is not as dynamic as our tradition is meant to be. Because we believe Jesus is the Head of the Church, and because we believe Jesus is our risen and living Lord — we believe that Jesus can continue to actively lead His church whenever we gather together to discern His will for our community. Our church tradition is not based on our freedom to do whatever we want, but rather our commitment to come together to determine what our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ desires us to do. That is what we are attempting during our Annual Meetings and Congregational Meetings — in truth, that is our intent when two or three of us gather together to decide any matter in the life of our church. We gather with the belief that if we defer to His will, Jesus has a unique ability to lead us and reveal the work He wants us to do in the coming year.



**Lent** has become a season that offers encouragement to engage in more intentional faith disciplines. Again, not dissimilar to the intent of our Annual Meeting, Lent is a time to attempt to make ourselves more available to the Lord. Lent is a six-week season where we choose to engage in spiritual disciplines that help to make room for the Holy Spirit of Jesus to enter our lives and reorient our ways. We prompt ourselves to a little strictness so that our typical overindulgences don't crowd out or drown out the oftentimes

*Continued on page five*

# Lent on God's Acre

## Pancake Sunday Sabbath Dinner

All Church dinner to usher in Lent.

Sunday, March 3, 5:30pm

*Smith Hall*

## Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, March 6, 8:00pm

*Meeting House*

## Lenten Book Study

*Let Me Ask You a Question: Conversations with Jesus*

Sundays 9:00am (*Parlor*)

Mondays 6:30am (*Library*)

Tuesdays - Women's Group 9:30am (*Parlor*)

Wednesdays 7:00pm (*Library*)

## Lenten Musical Moments

Wednesday at 12:00pm

*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

## Lenten Prayer Services

Deacon led service of prayer and reflection.

Wednesday evenings at 8:15pm

*Chapel*

Communion will be served

## Lenten Youth Worship

Wednesday, March 20

Dinner, *Smith Hall*, 6:30pm

Worship, *Meeting House*, 7:00-8:00pm

## Book Talk with Matthew Croasmun

Sunday, March 31, 11:00am

*Parlor*

## The Chancel Choir presents Mozart's "Vesperae solennes de confessore"

Sunday, April 7, 10:00am Worship Service

Prelude beginning at 9:50am

# Holy Week

## Blessing of the Palms

Sunday, April 14, 9:30am

*Church Steps*

## Maundy Thursday

Tenebrae Service

Thursday, April 18, 8:00pm

*Meeting House*

## Good Friday

Friday, April 19, 7:00am

Pivot Good Friday Prayer Breakfast

*Woodway Country Club*

## Easter

Sunday, April 21

## Sunrise Service

6:00am

*Church Steps*

This Contemporary Sunrise Worship Service is led by our YG Fish and YG Worship Team. A light breakfast follows in the Parlor.

## Traditional Easter Services

9:00am

*Meeting House*

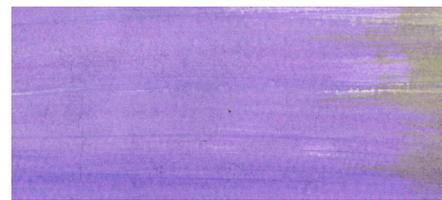
Prelude beginning at 8:45am

11:00am

*Meeting House*

Prelude beginning at 10:45am

*Childcare will be provided for Preschoolers in Room 7. All other children will remain in worship to experience and be a part of the Easter service.*



# Adult Education

## Lenten Book Study

Have you noticed the Gospels contain hundreds of instances in which Jesus asked questions? He invited all kinds of people into conversation, genuinely interested in what they had to say. This Lent we're inviting you into a conversation with Jesus. Think of it as form of prayer we might call "conversational prayer" or "dialogical prayer."

If you are among those who have participated or will participate in a Holy Land Pilgrimage, this will bring deeper meaning to that experience. If you hold a church leadership position: staff, deacon or ministry team member, this experience will bring a sense of clarity and purpose to your call to ministry. If you simply seek a closer walk with Jesus and to deepen your faith, this is for you.

The resource we will use is the book *Let Me Ask You a Question: Conversations with Jesus* by Matthew Croasmun. He is associate research scholar and director of research and publication at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture and Yale Divinity School. For each week during Lent, there is background material, reflections on the life and teachings of Jesus and invitations to respond to a question Jesus asked.

For Lent we are inviting each member of our church to use this resource, answer the question assigned for each day in Lent (Monday – Friday) and to join a group to discuss the concepts presented in the book and our responses to the questions. Following are the group opportunities beginning the week of March 10:

Sundays 9:00-9:45am (Parlor)

Led by Eric Dupee

Mondays 6:30-7:30am (Library)

Led by William Picard and Diana Beecher

Tuesdays 9:30-11:00am (Parlor)

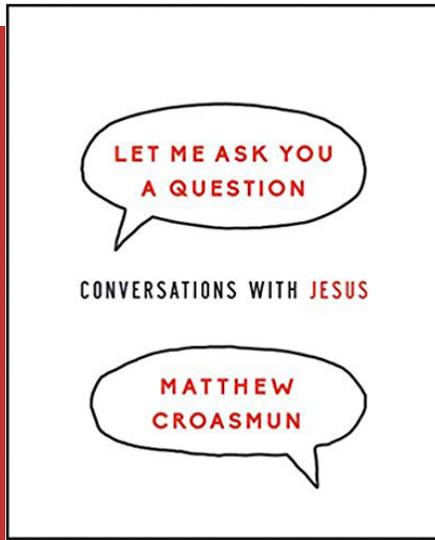
Led by Diana Beecher – Women's Group

Wednesdays 7:00-8:15pm (Library)

Led by Eric Dupee

*This group will conclude in time to attend the deacon led Lenten worship service.*

To reserve a copy of the book contact Laurel Carr at [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org) or stop by the church office.



## Let Me Ask You a Question: Conversations with Jesus

Matthew Croasmun

### WEEK 1

#### 3/11 Monday

Mark 10:46 – 52  
What do you want me to do for you?

#### 3/12 Tuesday

Mark 10: 35 – 45  
What do you want me to do for you?

#### 3/13 Wednesday

John 1:35 – 39  
What are you looking for?

#### 3/14 Thursday

John 5:1 – 9  
Do you want to get well?

#### 3/15 Friday

Luke 10:25 – 37  
How do you read it?

### WEEK 2

#### 3/18 Monday

John 8:2 – 11  
Has no one condemned you?

#### 3/19 Tuesday

Luke 7:36 – 47  
Do you see this woman?

#### 3/20 Wednesday

Matthew 7:1 – 5  
Why do you look at the speck...?

#### 3/21 Thursday

Luke 6:32 – 36  
If you love those who love you...?

#### 3/22 Friday

Matthew 18:21 – 35  
Shouldn't you have had mercy...?

### WEEK 3

#### 3/25 Monday

Matthew 6:25 – 34  
Why do you worry?

#### 3/26 Tuesday

Luke 10:1 – 35  
Did you lack anything?

#### 3/27 Wednesday

Mark 4:35 – 41  
Why are you so afraid?

#### 3/28 Thursday

Luke 9:22 – 25  
What good is it to gain...?

#### 3/29 Friday

March 6: 31 – 44  
How many loaves do you have?

### WEEK 4

#### 4/1 Monday

John 6:53 – 61  
Does this offend you?

#### 4/2 Tuesday

John 6:66 – 69  
You do not want to leave too, do you?

#### 4/3 Wednesday

Luke 6:46 – 49  
Why do you call me, "Lord, Lord...?"

#### 4/4 Thursday

John 9:1 – 38  
Do you believe in the Son of Man?

#### 4/5 Friday

John 13:31 – 38  
Will you really lay down your life for me?

### WEEK 5

#### 4/8 Monday

Mark 8:27 – 35  
Who do you say I am?

#### 4/9 Tuesday

John 18:28 – 37  
Is that your own idea...?

#### 4/10 Wednesday

Mark 10:35 – 45  
Can you drink the cup I drink...?

#### 4/11 Thursday

John 13:1 – 17  
Do you understand what I have done for you?

#### 4/12 Friday

Mark 15:22 – 37  
Why have you forsaken me?

### WEEK 6

#### 4/15 Monday

John 21 – 18  
Whom are you looking for?

#### 4/16 Tuesday

Luke 24:36 – 49  
Why are you troubled...?

#### 4/17 Wednesday

John 21:1 – 17  
Do you love me more than these?

#### 4/18 Thursday

John 21:17 – 23  
...what is that to you?

#### 4/19 Friday

John 11:1 – 44  
Do you believe this?

# Music News



## Lenten Musical Moments

### Noon on Wednesdays in the Meeting House

You are invited to Wednesday noonday recitals during Lent. This contemplative music will be given by Chancel Choir section leaders. Join us for 30 minutes in the Meeting House and invite a friend: they are free and open to the public.

MARCH 13



Antonio Abate  
tenor

MARCH 20



Dimitrie Lazich  
baritone

MARCH 27



Anne Maguire  
mezzo soprano

APRIL 3



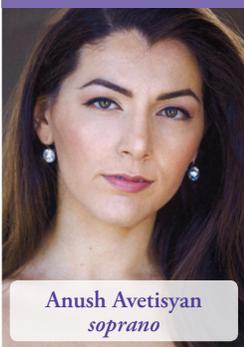
Diana Benton  
soprano

APRIL 10



Aram Tchobanian  
tenor

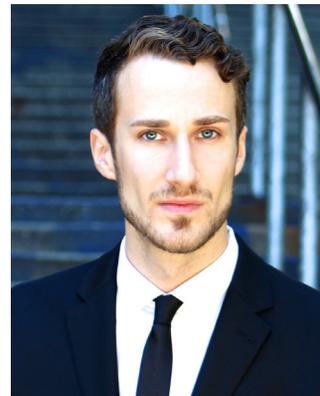
APRIL 17



Anush Avetisyan  
soprano

### Hans Tashjian in Recital

You are invited to a vocal recital by Hans Tashjian, choir scholar for the Chancel Choir. This is Wednesday, March 27 at 4:30pm at Yale University's Sprague Hall in New Haven. This is free and open to the public.



Hans Tashjian

### Vesperae solennes de confessore, K. 339 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Sunday, April 7

A 10 minute prelude will precede the service.

The Chancel Choir will present Mozart's "Vesperae solennes de confessore" during the 10:00am service on Sunday, April 7. There will be a 10 minute prelude before the service to include more of the music from this work. There will be four movements with choir, strings, organ, and timpani.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

### SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, June 1 at 7:00pm – Mary Bradley Clarke Fund Benefit Concert with reception following. Childcare provided.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING



The Congregational Church  
of New Canaan

Sunday, March 3, 2019  
11:00am in the Sanctuary

### Proposed Agenda:

- 1) Deacon's Report
- 2) Trustee's Report
- 3) Nominating Recommendations
- 4) Raymond Fund Update



## From the Pastor's Study

*Continued from page one*

“still small voice” of our Lord. We fast from — limit ourselves from — that which often clutters our lives, our senses, and our schedules. We try not to overeat, or overspend, or overschedule so that we can be more attentive to the season and to the subtle leadings of our Lord.

So, my dear church family, I hope you will make time and space in your schedules to join us for the Annual Meeting on March 3, after our 10:00am service. Additionally, as you read this, I would like you to begin to considering how you will observe Lent this year. Starting with our Ash Wednesday Service at 8:00pm on March 6, I hope you will consider participating in a number of the Lenten offering that are outlined in this newsletter.

Annual Meeting and the season of Lent are designed with a single purpose and intent in mind...to allow ourselves, individually and collectively, to more fully enter into the presence of our Lord and to be led in His ways.

Let's join together for this sacred journey!

Yours in Christ,  
Chapin

## Pastoral Care

### Support for Caregivers: Caring for a Loved One with Dementia

On Sunday, March 24, PMLT will offer a program for those caring for someone with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. The program will take place in the Parlor at 11:15am.



Christy Perone, of Alzheimer's facility Bridges by Epoch in Norwalk, will speak on Coping Mechanisms and Community Support Groups and Resources. This event is open to church members and also members of the community.

Resolve to connect

@GOD'S ACRE  
in 2019!

Sign in to myConnect today!  
[www.godsacre.org/myConnect](http://www.godsacre.org/myConnect)



connect  
*with each other*



grow  
*in your faith*



serve  
*your neighbor*

## Missions and Outreach



**Open Doors** provide shelter nightly with over 95 beds in their facility located at 4 Merritt St. From this same facility they operate the Manna House kitchen and pantry. They serve meals three times a day (over 20,000 per month) and provide boxed and canned goods to the working poor to help them make ends meet. Between the kitchen and the pantry, they provide approximately 60,000 meals per month to individuals and families in our community.

The Open Doors Ministry team serves lunch every 4th Tuesday of the month. Stephanie Radman [stephanieradman@aol.com](mailto:stephanieradman@aol.com) coordinates the team.

**Pacific House**, located at 597 Pacific Street, Stamford is a men's emergency shelter, which serves 60-85 men each night but can serve 100 or more men during the winter months. It operates 365 days, 24 hours per day, and provides breakfast and dinner daily. Individuals are allowed to seek shelter regardless of sobriety as long as their behavior is appropriate and they follow the Agency rules and regulations. Pacific House is the only regional shelter for men and young adult men in lower Fairfield County serving the four-town area of Stamford, Darien, Greenwich and New Canaan. The Pacific House Ministry Team led by Suzanne Brannan, [suzbrannan1@mac.com](mailto:suzbrannan1@mac.com), make and serve a dinner each 3rd Thursday of the month.

3/21/19 Pacific House Dinner Service, 4:30pm  
3/26/19 Open Door Lunch Service, 11:15am

Contact Marianna Kilbride at [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org)



WHAT'S YOUR M.O. ?

# Faith and Finance

Excerpted From [Tithe.ly](http://Tithe.ly),  
January 15, 2018:

Stewardship in the Bible is one of the essential lessons you need to learn as a disciple of Christ. But today, stewardship is often misunderstood, partially grasped, or not on anyone's radar at all. Sometimes it's even confused with tithing in the bible. So, what do you think about when you hear the word "steward"? Do you think about your finances? Do you have visions of your church running a giving campaign? Does taking care of the environment come to mind?



All of these ideas and much more are parts of what it means to be a steward. But they don't paint a complete picture of the meaning of biblical stewardship. In short: Biblical stewardship is one of the primary ways God calls us to live our life. It's a theme in the Bible you can trace from Genesis to Revelation. It's a calling rooted in creation, highlighted throughout the Bible, and influences the way you live your life for the glory of God.

## What is the definition of stewardship in the Bible?

Has someone ever asked you to watch their kids? Are you responsible for managing an office or people on behalf of an employer? Do you have a financial advisor overseeing your investments?

If you answered yes to any of these three questions, then you are or have been a steward.

In general, to steward is to manage something on someone's behalf. The Bible has a lot to say about stewardship, but here are seven big themes emphasized in biblical texts on stewardship:

### #1. God Created Everything

Stewardship in the Bible begins with the very first verse. We see in this passage that God is the creator of everything: He created the universe, the earth, and he created you. There's not one particle in the entire world that was not created by God. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen 1:1)

### #2. God Owns Everything

Not only did God create everything; God owns everything (Job 41:11; 1 Tim. 4:3-5). This is the beginning of all biblical stewardship principles. Your life is on loan from God. He has given you your life to steward for his glory and your good.

### #3. God Delegates Responsibility

God calls us to manage what he created on his behalf. If you haven't noticed, you do not see the individual members of the Trinity farming, building houses, or preaching the gospel. But, if you look with the eyes of faith, you can see God meeting the needs of people, drawing them to himself in faith, and tending to his creation through billions of people around the world.

This theme of participating in God's work is picked up by Paul in his first letter to the church at Corinth: "For we are God's fellow workers..." (1. Cor. 3:9). Elsewhere, Paul mentions that we are "working together with him..." (2 Cor. 6:1). God is at work in your life and around the world, and you have the privilege of participating in his work.

### #4. We Personally Steward Resources

God commands us not to love money and to be content with what we have (Her. 13:5). But he also commands us to work and take care of ourselves and family financially. Now, for different reasons, you may face a financial setback or just need help to pay your bills. During these times, it's okay to receive support from your family and friends, organizations, and even the government. In the verse above, Paul's words are intended to convey that God commands us not to exploit others and their generosity. "...aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one." (Thes 4:11-12)

### #5. We Steward Resources for Saving

God also leads us to save money for the future. Tomorrow, you do not know if you will face a hardship, such as an injury or sickness, and there will be a time when you're no longer able to work due to your age. Now, when it comes to saving, you may place your trust and hope in the money you save instead of the Lord. What is more, you may be tempted not to give to your church or others because you value your savings too much (Matt. 6:19-21).

### #6. We Steward Resources for Giving

In the Bible, you can argue that Christians are or are not required to tithe. Regardless of your beliefs about tithing, one thing you cannot avoid is that God commands you to give generously.

Again, there will be times in your life when you may not be able to give as much as you like. But aim to steward your resources in such a way that you may be able to give more. "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

### #7. We Steward Resources for Helping

As a steward of the resources God gives you, you will need to manage them in such a way that you can provide for the needs of others. Providing for others can include monetary gifts, food, and clothing, or just being hospitable with what you have. When it comes to helping others, God desires for you to take care of your family (1 Tim. 5:8), your church (Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18), and those in need (Matt. 25:35-40).

In the end, stewardship in the Bible boils down to this question: Who's the Lord of your life? Are you or is the Lord?



# Women's Fellowship

## Cake & Coffee Series

Tuesday, March 5, 9:30 - 11:00am

Join us for cake, coffee, and camaraderie at the beautiful 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.  
(203)952-4554 or [stephanieradman@aol.com](mailto:stephanieradman@aol.com)



## SAVE THE DATE

## Women's Fellowship Spring Luncheon Honoring Our Women Of Wisdom

Monday, April 1, 11:30am-1:30pm  
Elm Restaurant, 73 Elm Street



Please come and enjoy a fabulous lunch at the wonderful Elm Restaurant. Checks payable to Congregational Church of New Canaan, in the amount of \$32.00, should be mailed to Stephanie Radman, 912 Weed Street, New Canaan, CT 06840.

RSVP to Stephanie Radman [stephanieradman@aol.com](mailto:stephanieradman@aol.com) or (203)952.4554 by March 27.

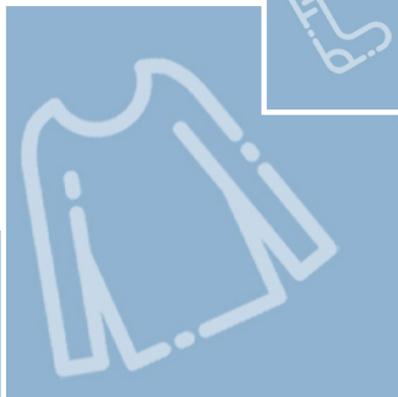
We will be honoring the Women of Wisdom of our church. Please come celebrate these lovely women.

Those born in 1939 or before are our honored guests. Rides are available

# Church School

## Midnight Run

Our confirmands are gearing up to serve in NYC homeless on March 8 for their second Midnight Run this year. Please offer your support by donating your gently used jackets, new men's socks, underwear, hoodies, and sweatshirts. All donations can be left in the donation box in Smith Hall. Your support is greatly appreciated!



## Pancake Sunday Sabbath Dinner

Join us Sunday, March 3 from 5:30-7:00pm for a Pancake Sunday Sabbath dinner as we usher in Lent together as a congregation! All are welcome - individuals, couples and families are encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to Caroline Leather at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@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, 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 April Newsletter, please submit by March 19th.  
Email submissions to: [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*

