



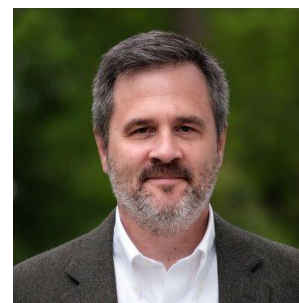
From the Pastor's Study

Dear Members and Friends,

With the coming of March, we enter into our observance of Lent. I think it is worthwhile to remind ourselves of the purpose of the season. Lent is a season of forty days, not including Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The season is a time of preparation for celebrating Easter. Many Christians use Lent as a time for taking on a spiritual practice.

Some of these practices involve "taking on" a spiritual discipline such as daily devotional reading, journaling, service, prayer, Bible Study, and exercise. Other practices involve deprivation such as giving up chocolate or television. This year we're encouraging you to find moments to pause and reflect, and we hope you will take advantage of our Lenten offerings as opportunities to pause.

Sometimes a pause is good for the soul. It gives us the chance to regroup, reflect, and refocus on God. We invite you to read, *Pauses for Lent: 40 Words for 40 Days* by Trevor Hudson. Hudson offers a beautifully minimalist book in which he focuses on one word for each day of Lent. You are invited to pause, focus on the word, read a scripture, and a brief meditation related to the word, and then offer a prayer. Pausing in this way will help you carve out time for God and refresh your spirit even in the midst of a busy life. Eric will lead a book study on Sundays, March 1 - April 5 from 9:00-9:45am in the Parlor.



Pause each Wednesday for a Musical Moment. Beginning March 4, each Wednesday in Lent there will be Lenten Musical Moments at 12:00pm in the Meeting House featuring a Deacon-led prayer and musical offerings from our talented section leaders. Communion will be served.

Pause on Thursday for Contemplative Prayer. Join Eric and Marianna each Thursday in the Chapel from 9:00-9:30am for the practice of Lectio Divina (holy reading) and meditation. No experience is necessary. Just show up a few minutes before 9:00am.

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*Pauses
for Lent*

Adult Education

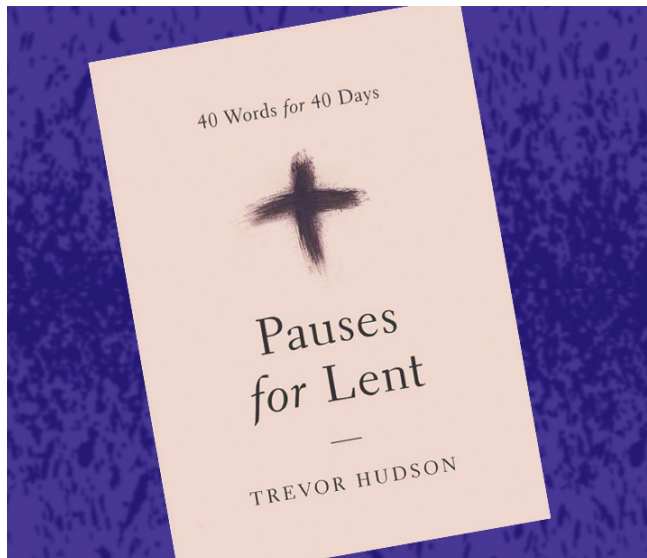
LENTEN ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS

Lenten Book Study

Sundays, March 1 - April 5

9:00-9:45am in the Parlor

Pauses for Lent: 40 Words for 40 Days by Trevor Hudson
Sometimes a pause is good for the soul. It gives us the chance to regroup, reflect, and refocus on God. In *Pauses for Lent*, Trevor Hudson offers a beautifully minimalist book in which he focuses on one word for each day of Lent. You are invited to pause, focus on the word, read a scripture and a brief meditation related to the word, and then offer a prayer. Pausing in this way will help you carve out time for God and refresh your spirit even in the midst of a busy life. You may find yourself sensing God's presence in a new way and discovering that God wants to meet you in the midst of your life as it is, muddles and all.



Learning Contemplative Prayer

Thursdays, February 27 - April 2

9:00-9:30am in the Chapel

Lent is a great time to focus on spiritual disciplines such as fasting, prayer, study, and service. My Lenten observance will include spending time in the Chapel and engaging in the form of prayer called contemplative prayer. It utilizes the practice of *Lectio Divina* (holy reading) and meditation. I invite you to join me. I will spend just a few minutes describing Christian contemplative prayer and providing instruction. We'll spend the rest of the time contemplating and meditating over a short scripture passage. No experience is necessary. Just show up a few minutes before 9:00am. Make 9:00am on the Thursdays in Lent an appointment with God that you need to keep.

ONGOING ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS

Monday Morning Bible Study

6:30-7:30am in the Library

led by William Picard and Marianna Kilbride

Luke's Gospel – Use the link to the Yale Bible Study materials found on the church website and join us bright and early on Monday morning.

Tuesday Women's Bible Study

9:30-10:30am in the Parlor

led by Marianna Kilbride

Luke's Gospel – Use the link to the Yale Bible Study materials found on the church website and join us on Tuesday morning.

Wednesday Jesus Top 40 Bible Study

9:30-11:00am in the Parlor

led by Chapin

Join us for a lively discussion that informs our upcoming sermons. Each Wednesday, we look at the Jesus Top 40 Bible story that will be used in worship a week and a half out.



Youth Ministry

A Mission Trip Thank You!

Our Mission Fish returned from our mission to Sacramento, California with a renewed spirit and greater understanding of the needs of all of God's people. As in previous years, the mission trip was a huge success and the entire mission team is grateful to our congregation for supporting this important work. We felt blessed by the continuous prayers before and during our mission – THANK YOU!



We lift up an extra special thank you to all those who generously gave as Mission Sponsors – our trip would not be possible without you. Hope you enjoyed your letters from the field from our mission fish!

Youth Sunday

The YG Mission Fish will lead our 10:00am worship service on Sunday, March 8. Worship Team will lead the music, Senior Leaders will share their testimonies and a lot of YG love will be shared! Please join us for worship and stay for our Mission Sponsor Brunch celebration in Smith Hall at 11:00am. We promise you will be moved by the passion our kids have for sharing their experiences.

Youth Worship

All youth grades 1st-12th are invited to our Youth Worship on Wednesday, March 18! Dinner is at 6:30pm in Smith Hall followed by worship in the Meeting House at 7:00pm. Join us as we usher in the season of spring and prepare our hearts for Easter.

YG Spring Retreat

Our 2nd Annual YG Spring Retreat to Camp Silver Lake is just around the corner! This experience is not one to be missed! Now is the time for your YGer to get signed up for the YG Spring Retreat. YG will leave after school Friday, March 13 and return for worship on March 15. Check your mail for registration or email Kelly Antonson at leather@godsacre.org.

From the Pastor's Study

Continued from page one

We hope that you will experience what a big difference making a brief pause for reflection, meditation, and connection can make.

On personal note, I want to thank the church for its support of my spiritual journey. On January 26, there was an Ecclesiastical Council in our Chapel as part of my process to be credentialed in the United Church of Christ.

It was a special time for me, and the vote was affirmative! I felt the love and support of the congregation before, during, and after the event. I'm very grateful to be serving among you.

Wishing you a rich and meaningful Lent,
Eric

Midnight Run: Donations Needed!

Our confirmands are gearing up to serve in NYC on March 6, for their second Midnight Run this year. Please offer your support by donating your gently used jackets, new men's socks, underwear, and toiletries. All donations can be left in the donation box in Smith Hall. Your support is greatly appreciated!



Women's Fellowship

Cake & Coffee Series

Friday, March 6
9:30 – 11:00am

Please come and enjoy fellowship with the women of the church at the home of Kristie Breed, 201 Canoe Hill Road, New Canaan.

Coffee and light refreshments will be served

RSVP by March 4 to Stephanie Radman, stephanieradman@aol.com or (203)952.4554.

Rides are available upon request.



Fellowship

Fellowship Dinner Parties

The Fellowship Ministry Team invites you to an adult dinner party on Saturday, March 7 from 7:00-10:00pm. There will be several dinner parties taking place simultaneously throughout the town. Each house will have 8 – 10 people in attendance and guests will be assigned a dish to prepare and asked to bring a beverage to share.

Please RSVP to Dawn Doak, dawn.norris@gmail.com no later than 5:00pm on March 2. Assignments will be emailed out on March 3.



Men's Fellowship (MG)

Save the Date MG (Men's Group) March Madness!

We are planning to meet up to watch some NCAA first-round hoops action!



When:

Friday, March 20
6:00pm onwards

Where:

Awesome sports viewing venue to be revealed soon - stay tuned.

In the meantime, get your team colors together, and get ready for MG & March Madness!

RSVP to Don Moyle, donmoyle@gmail.com or (917)817-4684.

GO MG!



Save the Date!



Please join Children & Family Ministries on Sunday, April 5 from 12:00-1:00pm for an Easter Egg Hunt. Come hunt for treat-filled eggs all across God's Acre and enjoy a delicious lunch in Smith Hall! Please bring an Easter basket to fill with your eggs. We will also use this opportunity to help stock the New Canaan Food Pantry as we are requesting that each child bring a non-perishable food item. See you there!

Missions and Outreach

Lenten Love

For children who live at Open Doors, a homeless shelter in Norwalk and longtime CCNC partner, the Children's Resource Center is a welcoming place where they come to learn, play, and get much-needed support. Children in the shelter and children of families who come to Open Doors for services other than sheltering receive educational enrichment from preschool through high school.

As part of our Lenten practice we will collect the items listed in support of the After-School Buddies Food Drive. Items may be dropped in the boxes provided in Smith Hall during Lent.



- Individual bags of pretzels or tortilla chips
- Shelf-stable fruit cups or applesauce
- Grape or strawberry jelly
- Juice boxes
- Mini bagels
- Fruit snacks
- Ice cream cones
- Shelf-stable milk boxes (like Horizon)
- Gift cards: Stop & Shop, ShopRite, or Costco to help purchase fresh fruits and veggies, string cheese, and other perishable items

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES THIS MONTH

March 19 - Pacific House Dinner Service, 4:30pm

March 24 - Open Door Lunch Service, 11:30am

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



Music Ministry

Lenten Musical Moments

You are invited to Wednesday noonday recitals during Lent. This contemplative music will be given by Chancel Choir section leaders. Join us in the Meeting House for 30 minutes of scriptures, prayer, communion, and beautiful music. Invite a friend: these are free and open to the public.



MARCH 4



MARCH 11



MARCH 18



MARCH 25



APRIL 1



APRIL 8



**Messe Solennelle (St. Cecilia)
by Charles Gounod
Sunday, March 29**

Prelude begins at 9:50am

The Chancel Choir will present Gounod's Messe Solennelle during the 10:00am service on Sunday, March 29. There will be a 10 minute prelude before the service to include six movements of the work. This work for choir, strings, flute, oboe, french horn, and organ will be directed by guest conductor, Scott Cranston. Soloists throughout the work will be Diana Benton, Anush Avetisyan, Anne Maguire, Antonio Abate, Aram Tchobanian, Dimitrie Lazich, and Hans Tashjian.



Charles Gounod



Save the Date

Saturday, May 30 at 7:00 PM

**Mary Bradley Clarke Fund Benefit Concert
with reception following.**

Childcare provided

Children's Music Ministry

Children's Choir: Spirit Singers & Joyful Noise

Annual Children's Musical:

The Story-Tellin' Man Announced!



Praising God through Music all month long!

Spirit Singers & Joyful Noise are singing this month, so please listen for our children's choirs on:

Sunday, March 1

Sunday, March 22

Save the Dates:

- **The Story-Tellin' Man Musical Preview:**

Wednesday May 13

Invite your friends from 4:30-5:30pm

- **Musical Presentation:**

Sunday May 17, 10:00am Service

Please consider having your child join a choir:

Spirit Singers (Grades 1-4) & Joyful Noise (Grades 4-8)

Combined Choir Rehearsals beginning March 1,
Wednesdays 4:00-5:15pm

God's Blessings!

-Ms. Anush

Our Church Community

Ministers

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

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

Staff

Kelly Leather Antonson, x824
Senior Youth Director

Anush Avetisyan, x821
Director of Children's Music and Drama

Erik Burns, x834
Youth Director

Claire Carbonier, x839
Youth Program Coordinator

Laurel Carr, x833
Program Manager

Dr. Jo Deen Blaine Davis, x827
Director of Music Ministries

Anthony Jones
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, x832
Director of Missions & Outreach

Caroline Leather, x835
Director of Children's Formation

Marie-Ange Masters, x823
Director of Accounting

Marianne Perry, x822
Pastoral Care Coordinator

Debbie Raymond, x826
Christian Formation Coordinator

Church Lay Leadership

David Carlson
Chair, Board of Trustees

Jill Robey
Chair, Board of Deacons

Janis Hennessy
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Jeff Altman
Chair, Personnel



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

Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the April Newsletter, please submit by March 15.

Email submissions to: laurel@godsacre.org.

myConnect 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