

THE PRESTON PILGRIM

The newsletter of
**The Preston City
Congregational Church**
Gathered 1698

DECEMBER - JANUARY

2012 -2013

CHURCH ADDRESS

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WORSHIP

9:00 & 10:30 A.M.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:45 A.M.

High School class: 10:30 A.M.

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WEBSITE: prestoncitycongregational.org

Follow us on **FACEBOOK**

News and information for the February newsletter is due in the church office by **January 20th**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.

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THERE IS NO CHURCH SEASON MORE
MEANINGFUL THAN

ADVENT.

...WHEN GOD PREPARES THE WORLD FOR
HIS ARRIVAL - AS A CHILD;

JESUS.

AND WHAT DOES HIS COMING MEAN?
IT MEANS WE HAVE

HOPE.

A HOPE WHICH THE WORLD CANNOT
GIVE. A HOPE WHICH IS

ETERNAL. FOREVER.

AND ALL HE ASKS IS THAT WE

BELIEVE;

NOT IN WONDER OF CHRISTMAS, BUT
IN THE WONDER OF

HIM.

GOD GAVE HIS BEST TO YOU AT
CHRISTMAS. WHAT WILL YOU GIVE
HIM? GIVE HIM YOUR

HEART.

Wishing you a meaning-filled Christmas!

Rev. Stan

DECEMBER HAPPENINGS...

Here are some events, dates, and times to keep in mind this Advent-Christmas season:

December 9th,

- ✓ *Unwrapped* Christmas gifts for Teen Challenge are due this morning.
- ✓ We're going caroling this afternoon! Everyone is welcome to be part of this holiday tradition which begins at 2.

December 11th,

- ✓ Senior Luncheon. Be sure to sign up! It's FREE, and it starts at Noon.

December 16th,

- ✓ It just isn't Christmas until the annual *Christmas Pageant* is presented by the children and young people of the Sunday School. Join us at 4 P.M., and then stay for food and refreshment afterwards!

December 23rd,

~CHRISTMAS SUNDAY~

- ✓ Be with us as we worship God and prepare for the birth of the Child. Services are at 9 & 10:30 A.M. The Sunday School will **not be** in session; families are encouraged to worship together.

December 24th,

~CHRISTMAS EVE~

- ✓ At 4 P.M., Sandy Dudek will lead a very meaningful service designed especially for families. Be present as the Child is placed in the outdoor Nativity scene.
- ✓ At 11 P.M., Rev. White will lead a candlelight service of carols, readings, and special music.

December 30th,

There will be one service of worship at 9 A.M. Join us as we sing the carols of Christmas. There is **no Sunday School**.

THE MONTH OF OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

WE WELCOMED into the Household of Christian Faith through the Sacrament of Baptism:

10-4 *Alana Olivia Ninteau* and *Nalani Chelsis Ninteau*. They are the daughters of Sweet & Christopher Ninteau of Preston.

10-21 *Jeremiah Brayden Turner*. He is the son of Amanda & Tomeko Turner of Voluntown.

10-28 *Bradley Aden Fenton*. He is the son of Danielle Fenton and Jason Durr of Preston.

We ask God's blessing upon these little ones!
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WE CONGRATULATED the following couples who were united in marriage:

10-6 *Elizabeth Whitworth* to *Brandon Haney*

10-13 *Kristin Henry* to *Erik Nelson* at the U.S. Coast Guard Chapel, New London, CT

11-2 *Erin Abrams* to *David O'Grady*

11-16 *Carrie Potts* to *Michael Fernandes*
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WE EXPRESSED OUR SYMPATHY to the family of *Ruth Fellows* who passed away on November 18th. Ruth was a quiet, faithful member of the church. She will be missed.

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THE RESULTS ARE IN...

A lot of fundraising events have been held since the last newsletter. Here's how they did:

Scarecrow Festival (Sept) \$8,591.54

Turkey Supper (Oct) \$1,812.60*

*(*As is our custom with every church supper, \$100 was sent to support the work of the Northeast Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches, formerly known as the Connecticut Fellowship which we have been a member of since 1987.)*

From this amount, \$1,500 was given to support the 2012 church budget!

Fall Yard Sale (Oct) \$1,122.88

Annual Christmas Bazaar (Nov) \$3,841.23*
("The Evening Circle," which has coordinated this event since its inception, generously offers a sizeable portion of the proceeds to the church's budget every year).

Did you know that *all* proceeds from fundraising events go directly toward the church budget? They do, *unless otherwise approved by the Standing Committee*.

If it were not for our many fundraisers, and the faithful workers (and organizers) of these events, we would have a very difficult time doing the many things we enjoy as a church. Please know how much we appreciate everything you do throughout the year!

TWO-CAN FOOD PANTRY NEWS

What a year it has been for our church's food pantry! Thanks to your contributions, and those of others in the community, as well as the town's churches, many people/families in Preston and surrounding towns have been helped. At Thanksgiving, 60 turkeys and food bags were distributed! The team of workers: Harriet Rosiene, Stella Dawley, Tracy Rosiene, Rich Lavoie, and Donna Bowles do a great job meeting the needs of many who are out of work, or are struggling to make ends meet. Word is getting around about the pantry, and the good work that is being done for others. Recently, the pantry received:

A grant from the Jewett City Savings Bank (JCSB), \$2,100.

And donations from:

JCSB \$246.51 – from their "Give Back" program (as a result of the *paper coins* you placed in the piggy banks at the Preston branch of JCSB)!

The Masons - \$200. *Thank you!*

The Thanksgiving Eve service at St. James Episcopal Church, Preston. An offering was received for the pantry which totaled \$361.48.

It's nice to know there are individuals and organizations truly dedicated to helping others! On behalf of the many who will benefit from your generosity, a heart-felt *Thank you*.

NEW MEMBERS

On Thanksgiving Sunday, we gave thanks for our newest members: Lisa Alder, Christopher Burden, Robin Faulise, Barbara Hellmers, Joyce Keil, Christopher McEwan, Bernard O'Brien, Michelle & Mitchell Swierczynski, Audrey Traylor, Lynn Wisniewski, Elizabeth Pugh, and Jane Smith. What a special day it was, to welcome them into the membership of the church. Welcome them, and get to know them in the weeks and months ahead!

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NEW CHRISTIAN FLAG

The Christian Flag flying proudly on the annex lawn is given by Shirley & Don Walsh, in memory of Millie Ford, a long-time church member and a friend to many. *Thank you!*

2013 BUDGET

By now, you should have received a letter from the church's Finance and Stewardship Committees seeking your financial support of the 2013 church budget.

The "proposed budget" for the year ahead is \$220,826. - an increase of \$425. from last year! Thanks to good financial management, and a generous congregation, we are able to keep our costs to a minimum from year-to-year. Have we heard from you? Have you submitted your pledge of financial support? To date (11/27), we have received 20 pledges totaling \$24,888. for the budget. In a church of our size, it takes many people to keep the programs, activities, and ministries going strong. Your financial support is always needed, and appreciated. We hope you will support the new budget which will be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting; February 12th, at 7 P.M.

If you did not receive your letter in the mail, please let the office know. Stewardship letters and pledge forms ARE available on the Information Center table (mid-level). You can mail the form to the church, or place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please contact a member of the Finance or Stewardship Committees with any questions you may have about giving to the church. Their names are listed in the mailing.

Please help us continue the good work already being accomplished – within the church walls, the communities we serve, and the world!

We give because He gave first!

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FINANCE REPORT FOR 2012

We are in the last WEEKS of the year; is your pledge of financial support to the church up-to-date? If you're not sure, please contact Financial secretary Mary Ann Coughlin at 860.376.0568. We're pleased to report that many people are catching up on their giving, THANKS. Will we end the year in the black as we have in past years? Stay tuned.....

CAN YOU HELP?

From time-to-time, people/families in our congregation are in need of a home-cooked meal. Maybe it's following a hospital stay, or when a baby is born, or upon the passing of a loved one, etc. Many people have generously volunteered to take on this act of compassion in years past, and now we are in need of more volunteers when the need arises. If you would be willing to be a part of this important ministry, please call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128.

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LOOKING AHEAD... 2013

Officers, Boards, and Committees are reminded that their report for the **ANNUAL REPORT** is due in the church office by January 20th. The reports DO NOT have to be typed.

The next **SENIOR LUNCHEON** is planned for Tuesday, January 8th, beginning at Noon. Be sure to sign up at the Information Center bulletin board. Space is limited to 60.

The next **GAME NIGHT** is scheduled for January 19th, from 6-9 P.M. in Fellowship Hall. Bring your favorite game, and a snack to share with others. This event is "Free" and is a great way to meet new friends. Sign the sheet on the Information Center bulletin board.

THANK YOU

Please know how grateful we are to those who have already made a contribution to cover the cost of our newsletter mailings.

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TRIPS & TRAVELS...

New for 2013 and beyond...

Hawaii in April, 2013. Brochures are now available for this trip at the Information Center.

South Africa in April, 2014. Brochures for this trip just arrived. Pick one up at the Information Center.

Both of these destinations are open to the community. We can also arrange these trips for people throughout the country. Spread the word!