

THE PRESTON PILGRIM

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

MARCH

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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Follow us on **FACEBOOK**

News and information for the April newsletter is due in the church office by **March 17**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.

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From the Minister...

"ONE"

Presently, every year, our church bylaws require the Clerk, Board of Deacons, and me to review the membership list for accuracy. One of our responsibilities has been to determine *who* is an *active* or *inactive* member of the church. Each year this process becomes more and more of an arduous task because our bylaws do not clearly state guidelines for determining active or inactive status.

At the Annual Meeting last month, those in attendance voted to have **one membership list**. There will no longer be a distinction between active and inactive members. In the months ahead, the bylaw committee will work on the wording for this bylaw change. They will present their suggestions and ask for your comments at the spring and fall semi-annual meetings (April & September) **BEFORE** the bylaw change is voted upon at the Annual Meeting in 2014.

My thought...

Now that this "new" membership list idea is in the works, I hope whenever an important matter comes before the church that **ALL** members will make sure they are knowledgeable and informed on the issue before they vote - especially those who may not regularly attend services, or may refrain from being involved in the life of the church.

The "one membership list" route is very unusual for a Congregational Church. Our "tradition" has always been to have an active and inactive list. However, church trends are leaning more and more in a new direction. Some churches do not believe that membership is important at all. Period. They are more concerned about people hearing the *Good News* of Jesus Christ than dwelling on who belongs, and who doesn't!

It's not easy when your church is 314-years old to do something new; some might even say "radical," but we're about to try!

See you in church; member or not!

Rev. Stan

DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, we expressed our sympathy to the family of *Theresa Browning* who passed away on February 2nd. A celebration of her life was held on February 16th. Please keep Theresa's family in your prayers!

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THE AMERICAN FLAG waving proudly on the annex lawn is given by Donald & Shirley Walsh in memory of their son-in-law, *Larry Sullivan*.

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THANK YOU and WELCOME ABOARD

The Annual Meeting marked the official ending of service to the church for the following people serving on boards and committees, and we thank them for their time and dedication:

Mary Lou Jensen; Sr. Deacon, **Tom Ames** and **Jim Wright**; Trustees, **Susan Conn** and **Cheryl Giuliano**; Board of Religious Education, **Charles Fessenden**; Finance, Bylaw, and Stewardship Committees, **Harry Coleman** and **Sandra Wright**; Members-at-Large

The following people were elected to serve on boards and committee in the year(s) ahead:

Lowell Calkins; Sr. Deacon **Stella Dawley**; Deacon, **Alan Starke** and **Richard Chalifoux**; Trustees, **Lisa Fessenden** and **Denise Luft**; Board of Religious Education, **Shirley Hodgkinson**; Finance Committee, **Andy Kuvent** and **Lisa Alder**; Members-at-Large, **Jim Wright**; Bylaws Committee, **Robin Lyon**; Music Committee

We appreciate ALL who accepted the call to serve in 2013 and beyond!

Newly elected board and committee members are reminded that their first meeting is this month. Call the office if you're not sure of the day or time.

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SCHOLARSHIP MONTH

We thank everyone who offered a monetary gift to the Helen Benjamin Scholarship Fund. We're pleased to report that a total of \$1,180 was raised during the month. It's not too late to offer your contribution. Put your gift in an envelope marked "*Scholarship Fund*" and be sure to include the information (in memory of..., in honor of...) that you want included in the worship folder on Scholarship Sunday, June 9th. We have many deserving graduates who would greatly benefit from your support. Please give if you are able.

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CHURCH CLEAN UP

Help us get the church yard and parking lots in shape for Easter. Bring your rakes and brooms to the church on March 16th, at 9 A.M. (rain/snow date 3/23). Please consider lending a hand. Coffee, juice, and donuts will be available. We should be finished by noon. See you there!

STUDY GROUPS

Both the Monday morning and Tuesday night groups will continue to meet in March. We're making our way through the book, Not A Fan. The discussions have been very interesting and informative. Consider attending a session, even if you haven't read the book. Come and meet some wonderful people as well. The coffee pot is on both days; Monday morning at 10, and Tuesday night at 6:30. The Tuesday group will conclude on March 19th.

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SPRING FORWARD

Don't forget to turn your clock ahead 1 hour on March 10th.

LOOKING AHEAD...

March 24, Palm Sunday, New Members will be welcomed into the church, and the annual Bread Festival will follow both services. Please bring your favorite bread/recipe to share with others. We thank Evey Putman for chairing this event again this year. Call her with your questions 860.376.2234.

March 28, Maundy Thursday, a communion service will be held in the Sanctuary at 7 P.M.

March 29, Good Friday, worship with us at Noon. The service is designed for children and adults. A special day is planned for the children following the service. Read about it in the Junior Pilgrim!

March 31, EASTER!! An **Ecumenical Sunrise Service** will begin the day at 6:30 A.M. at Amos Lake on Hollowell Rd. in Preston. In the event of rain, the service will be held in our Sanctuary. An **Easter Breakfast** will be served in the Sunday School hall beginning at 7. Be sure to sign up on the Information Center bulletin board. **THE CELEBRATION OF EASTER** will take place at 9 & 10:30 A.M. The choir will sing at both services, and Easter lilies will beautify the Sanctuary. Come and worship the RISEN Lord!

NEW MEMBERS

We're happy to tell you that new members will be received into the church on Palm Sunday, March 24, during both services of worship. If you'd like to join the church, we'd love to have you as "part of the family!" Sign your name on the bulletin board in the Information Center hallway. We'll send all the material you need to become a member. New members must be present on the 24th, and must meet with the Diaconate and Minister the week before joining.

From the Organist & Choir Director...

HANDBELL CHOIR

A handbell choir will start weekly rehearsals on Thursday, April 4, at 6 P.M. I am looking for 8 ringers who will commit to attending the practice sessions EVERY week from 6-6:50. The ability to read basic rhythm is a plus. Please see me after church, or call 860.642.6662, or email lyon.family@comcast.net if you are interested in becoming part of this choir --- *Robin Lyon*

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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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The last **SENIOR LUNCHEON** until the Fall is planned for Tuesday, March 12th, beginning at Noon. It's "Free," but you must sign up at the Information Center bulletin board. Space is limited to 60.

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THE JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP plans a lasagna dinner on **Saturday, March 23rd, from 5-7:00 p.m.** Tickets are: Adults \$10.00, Children 12 and under \$5.00; tickets are available after church services or by calling the church office. On the menu is lasagna, salad, bread, beverage and dessert; There is a signup sheet posted in the Information Center if you can help by making a lasagna or a dessert.

Our next **GAME NIGHT** is scheduled for March 16th, 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.

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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 2014

South Africa in April, 2014. Brochures for this trip are available at the Information Center. This destination is open to the community. We can also arrange this trip for people throughout the country. Spread the word!

KINGDOM ROCK...Where Kids Stand Strong for God put out by Group Publishing is the Vacation Bible School chosen for this summer.

July 15-19 from 9-11:30 a.m. we will experience Bible school in a new format! We will have Station Leaders and Crew Leaders and students will be integrated. What does all this mean?

An important meeting is planned for **Tuesday, April 23rd at 6:30 p.m.** where this new concept will be explained in detail by co-directors Sandy Dudek and Judy Ladegard. If you are interested in helping with Vacation Bible School this year, we have a place for you.

An important change: Registrations will be accepted up until July 1st. Registration forms will be available soon.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to talk to Judy or myself.

SCARECROW FESTIVAL KICKOFF!

We are happy that Shirley Hodkinson, a longtime member of the Scarecrow Festival Committee came forward to chair the festival. Carolyn Shea who has done a lot of work to assist the Chairperson in the past has agreed to serve as Co-chairman. Both of these women met with the Event Coordinating Committee prior to accepting these posts.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the festival: **September 28, 2013.** The Festival hours are:

Pancake Breakfast: 7:30-10:30

The Festival: 9:30-4:00

Chicken BBQ: 3:00-6:30 (onsite parking after 4:30 p.m.)

The committee welcomed Robin Faulise as a new member. She will work with Nancy Musa coordinating the vendor part of the festival. Holly Cyr is new to the Crow's Nest, having served the last few festivals working in the pavilion.

To volunteer to help, you may contact Shirley as follows: Home: 860.887.8760
Cell: 860.908.6493
Email: smhodkinson@sbcglobal.net

To reach Carolyn:

Home: 860.887.8592

Email: clshome@comcast.net

We, with grateful hearts, thank Linda Kent-Farinha for the phenomenal job she did getting the festival off the ground and chairing it for seven years!