

# THE PRESTON PILGRIM

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

## **APRIL**

**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 May newsletter is due in the church office by **April 21**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.

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### **From the Minister...**

#### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

(Part Two)

Last month in this column, I mentioned that the bylaws committee was charged at the Annual Meeting (February 12<sup>th</sup>) to create appropriate wording for a "one membership list." This new list would replace the present Active/Inactive membership list which has been the practice of our church for years; I would say probably since the founding (1698)!

#### **BACKGROUND**

Accurate record keeping has always been very important in Congregational churches; baptisms, weddings, funerals, *and* church membership. It still is! In the early days of our church, our building was called a "Meeting House." It was a gathering place for the town's people, where non-church meetings were held and important decisions decided. For years, the early church building was like a town hall. I find it interesting that after all these years people **STILL** come into the church office, seeking information about an ancestor; their baptismal date, where they are buried, when they joined the church, who they married, etc. If it were not for the accurate record keeping of our church clerks through the years, this information, sought by relatives, would be difficult to obtain.

#### **TODAY**

In an effort to make record keeping simple, and to be "nice," and "not offend," or "hurt the feelings" of members who have not been seen at

worship for a long time (in some cases years), those who attended the Annual Meeting voted to explore the possibility of having a "one membership list." Members will vote on accepting this new list at the 2014 Annual Meeting. The "one membership list" would make no distinction between active and inactive members. Everyone, regardless of whether or not they attend the services of the church would have the same status, MEMBER. Likewise, everyone would have the same privileges of membership, namely, to VOTE on important issues that may come before the church. To me, the thought of this idea is dangerous, and should be carefully considered before any new bylaw vote is taken. The present membership must think about the future church.

While I always want our church to be nice to everyone, I also want our church to do what is right and fair for the church we love – today, and especially in the years to come.

The bylaw committee has begun making "proposed" changes. We removed the word "active" from our bylaws, and when we did, we began to see how that one word can impact our church – and not always for the better.

Yes, I want us to be nice to everyone connected to our wonderful church, but I also want us to do what is right. Come to the meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>, at Noon, and hear more!

What do you think? More next month...

See you in church!

Rev. Stan

## DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH...

**WE WELCOMED** into the Household of Christian Faith through the Sacrament of Baptism: *Tristin Malone (Adult baptism)*. He is the son of Joanne MacDonald.

**WE EXPRESSED** our sympathy to the family of *Ernest Abrahamson* who passed away on March 13th. Our thoughts are with his wife, Emma, and his children.

**WE WELCOMED** the following new members into the life of the church on Palm Sunday: Lisa Converse, Jamie Webster, John D. Nichols, and George & Wenona Tedeschi. Get to know these wonderful people. We're glad you're here!

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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 9<sup>th</sup>. 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

Thanks to everyone who helped get the church yard and parking lots in shape for Easter! We had a record-turnout of volunteers this year; especially young people. You were a huge help, and we appreciate what you did. It was nice to see so many families as well. All ages were present, and we were finished in about 2 hours!

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### SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

April 14, 2013

The April Semi-Annual Meeting of the Preston City Congregational Church will be held in Fellowship Hall starting at Noon for the following actions:

1. To hear the reports of Officers, Boards, Committees, and other church organizations.
2. To transact any other business that may be brought before the congregation.

--Barbara J. Perry, Clerk

Please note: All financial reports need to be received in the church office by Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, to prepare a booklet in time for the meeting.

## STUDY GROUP

The Monday morning study group will continue to meet in April. 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 will be on!

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## LOOKING AHEAD...

**IT'S APRIL** and that means it's time for the homemade "Chicken Pot Pie Supper." Tickets are on sale during the coffee hours on Sunday mornings, or by calling the church office. The date of this very popular community supper is:

April 27, from 4 - 6:30 P.M.

Tickets:

\$10 Adults and \$5 Children (12 and under)

Don't wait until the last minute to get your tickets! Help will be needed preparing for this supper the day before and the day of the supper. A sheet listing where your help is needed is posted on the Information Center bulletin board. Please lend a hand if you can!

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## HELP OUR TROOPS

"Times are tough in Afghanistan", says 1<sup>st</sup> SG Christopher Shetland who attended our church years ago. Food for the troops is not as plentiful as it once was - cutbacks! Throughout the month of April, we will collect food items for Chris and his fellow soldiers. At the end of the month, all items collected will be mailed. If you'd like to contribute, here is a list of items they would appreciate receiving: granola bars, pop tarts, instant oatmeal, breakfast bars, canned juices, maple syrup, pancake mix, (just add water), peanut butter, jelly, jam, cookies, crackers, cereal, instant coffee, sugar, powdered creamer, and honey. PLEASE leave your donations in the Elizabeth Allyn memorial box, located next to the table in the Information Center. DO NOT leave these items in the food pantry boxes in the entry ways. Thanks for helping and supporting our troops!

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## PICTURE DAY

It's time for a new church picture directory. It's been 5 years since the last one was compiled, and many new faces have since found their way to the church. Sign up on line at: <http://eastctportraitefx.brownbookit.com/schedules>, or call the company directly to reserve a time for you and your family to have your picture taken (860.821.9090). Photo sessions are scheduled for April 22 - 26 and April 29 - May 4<sup>th</sup>. A free directory as well as a 10x13 photo will be given to each family. Please sign up TODAY!

## **YARD SALE TIME...**

The Spring yard sale is planned for Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, from 8 – 2 P.M. (rain date: June 1). Good, clean, re-sellable items are now being accepted. No clothing, air conditioners, tires or computers will be accepted. Please DO NOT leave items outside the annex. Call Stella Dawley (860.887.6452) to arrange a time to drop off your items. Consider lending a hand on the 25<sup>th</sup>. A sign-up sheet is posted on the Information Center hallway bulletin board. Thanks!

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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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## **SUMMER YOUTH CAMP 2K13**

is at Singing Hills Campground, Plainfield, New Hampshire from Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup>- Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup> for Jr. High Camp, Grades 5-8, and Sr. High Camp, Grades 9-12. The cost per camper is now \$225.00. A **\$50.00** non-refundable deposit will save your place. Registration forms are available in the Information Center or through the church office. Because of the changes in camp registration, the Board of Religious Education is not aware of who is going to camp. If you would like financial assistance, you **MUST** contact the D.R.E. Sandy Dudek by May 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **THROUGH THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION,**

ten young people became members of the church on March 10<sup>th</sup>. They are:

**Russell J. Files, Zachary Houghton, Christian Lombardi, Tristan Malone, Sarah McLaughlin, Amanda Migliaccio, Ryan Miller, Ciera Senuta, Seth Strader, and Joshua Wisniewski.**

Christian Lombardi, on behalf of the class, presented Senior Deacon, Lowell Calkins, with a Christian flag set and an American flag set. The boys were presented the Revolution Bible and the girls were presented True Images. Both Bibles are geared to the teen years and were given by family and congregation members. We are most pleased to welcome these fine young people to the church and look forward to their continued involvement for years to come.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Kendall Kobelski and Grace Park who were named to the Dean's List at URI! Your church family applauds you and is proud of you!

## **A BAKE SALE** will be held by the

High School Class on Mother's Day following the church service. The proceeds of the sale will benefit Kalid, the High School Class mission child from Ethiopia. The cost is \$35.00 per month and this fundraiser will help cover the cost during the summer months. Anyone who would like to help the class out by baking would be appreciated.

## **THE SENIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP**

(grades 9-12) has been busy and active! They went bowling on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Many of them helped out with the church clean-up and painted birdhouses for Good Friday following that. They thank everyone who supported their bulb fundraiser in any way. The orders should be in soon.

## **THE JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP**

(grades 6-8) held their lasagna dinner on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. They wish to thank everyone who supported them by making lasagna or dessert or buying a ticket. With the next day sales, they made a profit of \$651.00. They donated \$105.00 of their Christmas bazaar fundraiser to cover three months of support for Kalid of Ethiopia. They helped with the church clean-up and went to Buttonwood the following (chilly) day!

## **ADULT MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER**

We're selling perennials at the church yard sale on May 25<sup>th</sup>. We would welcome any and all donations of plants that you're thinning out of your gardens this spring. The Adult Mission group is hoping to help "Super Storm Sandy" victims in New Jersey this fall and all monies raised will help defray some of the expenses. We'll let everyone know once those plans are finalized. We'd love to have you travel with us! If you have a heart for missions, but obligations don't allow you to travel with us for a week, this is one way you can be part of our team. Please speak with Laurie Bowers or Lori Hall if you have any questions.

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## **TRIPS & TRAVELS...**

*New for 2014*

**South Africa.** 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!