

# THE PRESTON PILGRIM

The newsletter of  
The Preston City  
Congregational Church  
Gathered 1698



**DECEMBER - JANUARY**  
**2014 - 2015**

## CHURCH ADDRESS

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Preston, CT 06365-8108

## TELEPHONE

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## WORSHIP

9:00 & 10:30 A.M.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:45 a.m.

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WEBSITE: [prestoncitycongregational.org](http://prestoncitycongregational.org)

Visit us on **FACEBOOK**

News and information for the January newsletter is due in the church office by **December 21**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.



### *You're too busy!*

I attend church when I am on vacation. In November, it was a Presbyterian church - the 9 A.M. service, where I was one of about 30 worshippers.

The people were friendly and welcoming of me. In a small congregation, the visitor stands out in the crowd.

I sat in the center section of the Sanctuary, listening to the Pastor's announcements before the service began. Then, the "Praise Band" consisting of seniors took their places and began to play the first chorus - guitar, drums, bass, keyboard, and conga drums. Two younger adult women led the singing. The band and singers were very good, a real "plus" to the service.

As the service got underway, I stood to sing and participate in worship. I could not help but notice a middle-aged woman sitting near me remaining in her seat. She was seated NOT because of frailty or a disability; she was seated

because she was more interested in reading emails and texting people. I thought, "That's different. The service has started, and she's on the phone! Come on, put it away, FOCUS!" God deserves our undivided attention. Nothing less!

We live in a time when so many *things* are vying for our attention. They pull us in different directions, sometimes away from the things that should matter most to us, like God and family. They become less important, and *things* become even more important.

It's Christmas time, and once again things will try to lure us away from the true meaning of the day. Beware! We human beings are easily distracted - especially when it comes to our time with God. The world calls us to choose what is big, shiny, expensive, and new. God calls us to look at something small, simple, free, and for all people - the Child, the Christ and Savior! He will outlast all our *finite things* -- he always has.

Friends, things will come and go in life, but Christ comes and stays! If you don't have time for Him this Christmas, you're too busy!

Wishing you a meaning-filled Christmas!

  
Rev. Stan



## DURING NOVEMBER

We expressed our sympathy to the family of: **Alton "Al" MacLachlan** who passed away on November 7. He joined the church in 1996. Al is now free from years of intense pain that kept him homebound. Our prayers are with his wife, Doris.

**Robert Muttart** who passed away November 24. Bob was a wonderful man, a quiet man, a man who loved his church. He was a member for 62 years! He enjoyed life; being with good friends and family. He will be missed by many!

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We welcomed into the membership of the church, on Thanksgiving Sunday: Beverly & Shaun Barske, Gail Brown, Gabriel & Samantha Gresko, Sean O'Brien, Jane & David Phillips, Jessica & Timothy Pappas, Andrea Rancourt & Traci Webster and Joseph Savino. Get to know these wonderful people - the newest members of the Preston City family! *We're glad you're here!*

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A HUGE thank you to Hopkins family for setting up the Nativity scene on the church lawn in time for the start of Advent!

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### BAZAAR NEWS

Those who coordinated this year's bazaar wish to thank everyone who contributed to its success. Thank you for hand crafted items donated, and for the many baked goods as well. We appreciate what you did!

There may still be nuts available for purchase; although the selection is very limited. You can make a purchase on Sunday morning during the coffee hour - while supplies last!

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### STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Our pledge drive for the 2015 church budget (\$233,923) is proceeding very well - thanks to YOU! To date (12/4), the amount pledged is \$108,876. If you have not yet offered your pledge to support your church in the year ahead, consider doing so before year's end. Pledge forms are available on the Information Center table, or you can call the office, and we will mail one to you. We thank you in advance for your generosity and support of the church.

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### HELP ...

Volunteers are needed to serve as door monitors on Sunday mornings during both services of worship. The duties of the monitor are posted on the hallway bulletin board (mid-level). Please contact coordinator Lowell Calkins (860.887.5939) if you have any questions.

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### ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Join us Monday mornings, from 10 to 11 A.M. in Halls' Hall (coffee hour room). Starting January 5, 2015, we will be reading and discussing Max Lucado's best-selling book, "*Fearless*." If you'd

like to purchase a copy of the book, you may do so by contacting the church office. We have a few extra copies available. You can also pick up a copy in local bookstores, or from Amazon.com.

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### LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!

**GAME NIGHT**, Saturday night, January 17, from 6 - 9 P.M. in Fellowship Hall. This is a night out for adults -- an opportunity to meet other people, play some games, sing Karaoke, and enjoy a fun evening. Everyone is asked to bring a snack to share. Soda and coffee will be available. Bring your favorite game, or play one of the many we have at the church. Please sign the sheet on the bulletin board if you plan to attend.

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### FLOWER COMMITTEE NEWS

Thanks for the beautifully decorated Sanctuary this Advent season, and for the outdoor wreaths and planters. Everything looks so nice!

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### December "CHRISTMAS" Events

14<sup>th</sup>. The adult choir presents a Christmas cantata; *The Gift of the Father's Love* at both services! Don't miss it! Later in the afternoon, at 4 P.M., the children of the Sunday School will present their annual Christmas pageant. This is always a holiday treat! Pizza for everyone follows!! Plan to attend.

21<sup>st</sup>, **CHRISTMAS SUNDAY**. The Sunday School will not be in session. Families are encouraged to worship together. The Sanctuary will be decorated with beautiful memorial poinsettias. The choir will sing at both services, and the handbell choir will perform! It's going to be a wonderful and inspirational morning, and yes... there will be a children's sermon for ALL!

24<sup>th</sup> **CHRISTMAS EVE**. Join us a 4P.M. for a service designed for children and their families. Sandy Dudek will lead this service.

A candlelight service is planned for 11 P.M. that evening. Come and join with others from the community as we sing the carols and await His birth. It's always a very special night!

**REMEMBER...** On December 28<sup>th</sup>, there will be one service of worship; 9 A.M. The Sunday School will NOT in session. Be with us for a special service of worship!

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### LOOKING AHEAD...

Here are some January dates to mark on your calendar:

1/5, **Bible Study**, 10 A.M. *Fearless*, by Max Lucado

1/13, **Senior Lunch**. Did you sign up?

1/17, **Game Night**, 6-9 P.M.

1/18, **Annual Reports** are due today.

1/31, "**Soup-Chili**" Supper (snow date: 2/1)



## THE CHURCH MEMORIAL FUND

For many years, the church has had a memorial fund - a monetary fund established in memory of a loved upon their death. The primary purpose of the memorial fund is to keep the church financially healthy, and to aid her in her many endeavors.

According to our current bylaws, upon the death of a loved one, the family may establish a memorial fund account for one year. **After one year**, if the family has not approached the church expressing a desire to use their loved one's memorial fund for a specific purpose (approved by the Diaconate), the account will be placed in the church's general memorial fund.

What better way to remember and honor the passing of a loved one than having contributions offered to the church following their death? So much good has been accomplished through the years because of the memorial fund.

If you have any questions about the memorial fund, please contact the church office.

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## YOUR COOPERATION IS NEEDED

Please remember if you are planning to use one of the church halls for an event on Sunday that **both halls and the kitchen are in use until 1 P.M.** Please **DO NOT** arrive early planning to set up for your event while church-related events are still in progress. Your understanding is appreciated.

## 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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## TRIPS AND TRAVELS

Is there an interest in traveling to **New Orleans** in October 2015? How about a trip through the Canadian Rockies & Glacier National Park? This church trip is scheduled for August 14 - 20, 2015. Highlights include: Calgary, Waterton Lakes National Park, Glacier National Park, "Going to the Sun Road", Banff, Columbia Icefield. The cost is \$3,199 (Double), \$3,949 (Single), \$3,169 (Triple) which includes: Round trip air from Logan International Airport, air taxes and fees/surcharges, and hotel transfers. *Not included in the price is the cancellation Waiver and insurance of \$205 per person.* This trip is open to the community.

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## FRIENDS & FAMILY CAFÉ

Tuesday mornings, 9 - 11:30

In Fellowship Hall

Stop by and enjoy a cup of coffee, some sweets, and conversation. It's FREE and open to the community.



“STAR OF WONDER” will be presented as this year's Sunday School pageant on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. It is being directed by Naomi Bushnell; Melissa Blondet and Katy Hopkins are directing the 3 & 4 years old and kindergarteners. This note has been received from Naomi:

*The Sunday School children are performing a Christmas pageant on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. The performance is 30 minutes. They have been working very hard since October. Of course, their families will be present as audience. However, can you please attend and witness their special message.? This would be so much more rewarding for each of them. It's free. It's "our children." It's a children's musical of hope. Their "sermon" should be heard by all of us! Please fit them in your life that day.*

Pizza and beverages will be served following the pageant sponsored by The Board of Religious Education and served by some of our teens. Pageant families are asked to bring cookie plates.

**THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS MISSION PROJECT** for November 16<sup>th</sup> was to serve a lite breakfast to the veterans who reside in the American Legion Veteran's Home in Jewett City. Following this, they built a bench for the veterans to sit on outside their Home. I saw a picture of it and noticed PCCC Sunday School was carved on the bench! It was an awesome experience I've heard with a great turn out of kids. Thank you so much to our High School teachers, Lisa & Scott Van Alst and Liz Del Core and Steve Strader who helped them with this carpentry project. They ended up staying until 3:00 p.m. along with some of our teens to complete the project. Thank you to Board of Religious Education member, Shari Purcell, and to the BRE for funding the cost of the bench.

Their December mission projects have been mailing cookies to the college kids who previously were in the Sunday School and they are now putting together a Christmas basket for a 24 year old woman who struggles every day to obtain many things we take for granted. We hope to fill her basket with items to feed not only her body, but her soul as well! We welcome your contributions. There is a red bucket in the Sunday School Hall where they can be placed **next Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** or dropped off at the church office during the week.

**THANK YOU** to those who provided turkeys and cash donations for the Sunday School Thanksgiving baskets. Your generosity touched many families.

# The Preston Junior Pilgrim



Preston City Congregational Church Sunday School Newsletter



**A Christian symbol  
for hope...see the  
CROSS!**

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

**HOPE...**I often spend a long time thinking about what my newsletter message will be and I had decided upon HOPE. I had planned to get up at 5 a.m. and type it right out. After all, I had been thinking about it for a week. In the middle of the night we got a call that one of our children had a fireplace/chimney fire that left quite a bit of area destroyed or damaged. When morning came, and we could be part of the "morning after" discussion and activities, it made me realize the resiliency of the human spirit to surmount the situations put before us. Plans immediately were being made for cleanup and repairs. It reminded me of when the third church building burned in 1886, plans were made *immediately* to rebuild. The picture hangs outside my office of parishioners with umbrellas as the beginning timbers were constructed.

**THIS PAST** Sunday, the candle lit was the candle of HOPE as we began Advent...a time of preparation for Christ's coming. In my preparation for last Sunday with the children in Sunday School, I read: "Advent hope is not based on our immediate experience of life (which can sometimes be more cause for despair than for hope), but on our trust in God. Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, writes: "HOPE means more than just hanging on. It is the conscious decision to see the world in a different way than most others see it. To hope is to look through the eyes of faith to a future not determined by the oppressive circumstances of the present. To hope is to know that the present reality will not have the last word. It is to know that God rules." I liked this explanation.

A SYNONYM of hope is TRUST. What kind of situations, anxieties do you find yourself in today? Do you continue on with trust that your circumstances will be temporary. In the midst of your difficulties, do you remember that the Lord has plans for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (from Jeremiah 29:11). Let's keep this in our thoughts as we close out 2014 and look forward to 2015.

IT IS SO important to teach our children to trust God in all circumstances. Too many of them run head long into problems when a relationship ends, when they have friends in accidents, when a divorce occurs in their family, to name a few pitfalls for our youth. It's important that they come to know Christ as their Lord and Savior. Encourage them to come to Sunday School, to church, to "Bring It", to youth group...there are many sources of inspiration available to them.

AS THE DAYS COUNT down to Christmas, let us enthusiastically look forward to all the ways we might help plant hope in each other's hearts. It is vital to our well-being.

TO ALL OF YOU, a blessed and holy Christmas. May you not only enjoy being with your family and friends, but find quiet moments to say, "thank you God for all you are to me...you are my hope and my future...come what may."

May the SONshine through me,

*Londy Dudek*



## DECEMBER BIBLE VERSES

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." (Psalm 23:1) (N3-Grade 2)

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, according to his purpose."  
Romans 8:28 (Grades 3-12)

## JANUARY BIBLE VERSES

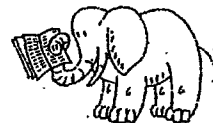
"...Do to others what you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12) Golden Rule

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Luke 6:37

PLEASE ENCOURAGE students to learn these verses; they will serve them well the rest of their lives. To qualify for an award at the end of the year, verses must be correctly recited by the end of each month to Mrs. Dudek or their teacher. PLEASE NOTE: students who have recited the Bible verses will be posted on the Sunday School bulletin board in the SS Hall.



Resolve to  
read your  
Bible  
each  
day



Memory Verse

NOVEMBER  
 S M T W T F S  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
 9 10 11 12 13 14 15  
 16 17 18 19 20 21 22  
 23 24 25 26 27 28 29  
 30

# December 2014

JANUARY 2015  
 S M T W T F S  
 1 2 3  
 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17  
 18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

To place flowers in church during Decem-ber, call Joyce Brew-ster, (860.376.4167)	1 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	2 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a ARC 10:30a SS pageant rehearsal 6p	3 ARC 10:30a AA 7:30p	4 Hand bell rehearsal 6-15p Adult choir 7p	5 Children's cookie bake 3-6p (JPF scheduled Activity)	6
7 Communion Wor-ship 9, 10:30a SS communion 9:05a "Two-Can Sunday" Adult choir sings 8a Deacons' mtg. 11:45a All church caroling 2p	8 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	9 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a ARC 10:30a Senior lunch noon SS pageant rehear. 6p Board of Religious Education meeting 6p	10 ARC 10:30a St. Jude's worship 11a AA 7:30p	11 Hand bell rehearsal 6-15p Adult choir 7p	12 Junior Pilgrim Fellow-ship Gingerbread House challenge 4-5:30p	13
14 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Storytelling Sunday Cantata 9, 10:30a "Bring It" 10:30a SS pageant 4p	15 Bible study 10a Confirmation mid -year Exam 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	16 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a ARC 10:30a	17 ARC 10:30p Creamery Brook 3p Trustees' mtg. 6:30p Standing Committee meeting 7p AA 7:30p	18 Hand bell rehearsal 6-15p Adult choir 7p	19	20 JPF volunteer at St. Vincent De-Paul Soup Kitch- en
21 Worship 9, 10:30a Adult choir 9a, 10:30a NO Sunday School "Bring It" 10:30a Food distribution Sun-day	22 NO Bible study NO Confirmation Yoga 6:30p	23 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a ARC 10:30a Adult choir rehearsal 7p	24 ARC 10:30a Christmas Eve wor-ship 4, 11p AA 7:30p	25 Christmas We welcome the birth of our Savior!	26	27
28 ONE SERVICE OF WORSHIP 9a NO Sunday School NO "Bring It"	29 NO Bible study NO Confirmation Yoga 6:30p	30 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a ARC 10:30a Adult choir pot luck 6:30p	31 New Year's Eve Drive safely!	Please check with Rev. Stan or Sandy Bagdasarian using our names as references. This cour-tesy would be very much appreciated	LOST OR FOUND Something at church? There is a basket in the Information Center next to the table.	PLEASE NOTE: Active church mem-bers who wish to bor- row church property, (tables, chairs, etc.) call the church office at 860.887.4647.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**  
**SUNDAYS:**  
**Morning worship, 9a.m., 10:30 a.m.**  
**Sunday School 8:45 a.m.**  
**Coffee hour, 9:50 a.m., 11:30 a.m.**  
**Children's Choir: 10:00-10:25 a.m.**  
**Youth Choir: 10:00-10:25 a.m.**  
**Junior & Senior Pilgrim Fellowship**  
**Check church bulletin**  
 The newsletter is posted on our website:  
[prestonjcongregational.org](http://prestonjcongregational.org)

**INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATIONS:** Time in to WICH, WCTY, WNLC, WKML, or Television Channel 3 or you may check Facebook or our website: [prestonjcongregational.org](http://prestonjcongregational.org)  
 When Sunday School is cancelled, church is **NOT CANCELLED** unless specifically announced.

**ZAYCON FOODS...** have you ever heard of them I never had until several months ago; they called the church office to use our parking lot occasionally to dispense their foods, primarily meats. For allowing them to do this, they give us 40 lbs. of boneless chicken breasts, 40 lbs. of hamburger, etc. We have used the chicken for our chicken pot pie suppers and it is superior quality in my opinion and at competitive prices. The last time they used our lot, they had three boxes that had not been picked up so I asked if I could buy one. The driver came in and set up an account for myself on line and paid for it with my credit card. If you would like to check this out yourself, go to [www.zayconfoods.com](http://www.zayconfoods.com). You may also email [Matt@ZayconFoods.com](mailto:Matt@ZayconFoods.com). Please feel free to ask me any questions you might have.  
*Sandy Dudek*

# Epiphany

# JANUARY 2015

DECEMBER 2014							FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
To place flowers in church during January, call Joyce Brewster (860.376.4167)	Please note: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (tables, chairs) call the church office.	Please check with Rev. Stan or Sandy before using our names as references. This courtesy would be appreciated.		<b>1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b> Health and happiness! NO adult choir	2	3
4 Communion worship 9:10:30a SS communion 9:05a Adult choir sings 9a Two-can Sunday	5 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	6 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 ARC 10:30a	7 ARC 10:30a AA 7:30p	8 Hand bell rehearsal 6:15p Adult choir 7p	9	10
11 Epiphany Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Bring it! 10:30a	12 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	13 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 ARC 10:30a Senior Lunch Noon Board of Religious Education 9p	14 ARC 10:30a St. Jude's worship 11a Finance Committee meeting 7p AA 7:30p	15 Hand bell rehearsal 6:15p Adult choir 7p	16	17 Adult Game Night 6-9p
18 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Adult choir sings 9a	19 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day NO Bible study NO Confirmation Yoga 6:30p	20 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 ARC 10:30a	21 ARC 10:30a Trustees' meeting 6:30p Standing Committee meeting 7p AA 7:30p	22 Hand bell rehearsal 6:15p Adult choir 7p	23	24
25 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Storytelling Sunday Bring it! 10:30a Food distribution Sunday	26 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	27 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 ARC 10:30a	28 ARC 10:30a AA 7:30p	29 Hand bell rehearsal 6:15p Adult choir 7p	30	31 Soup/Chili supper 4:30-6p Inclement weather—held following day

## WE WANT SNOW

**THE JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP** (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders) enjoyed an authentic Thanksgiving Dinner together on November 21<sup>st</sup>. They will be going caroling with the church today. On Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 4-5:30 p.m. they will participate in the gingerbread house challenge, and have a Yankee swap! Impromptu sledding parties may happen in the winter months complete with hot cocoa and snacks. I think they'll be praying for snow...I don't know about the rest of us, though! Co-leaders Linda Farinha (860.608.6641) or Andy McCaslin (860.917.6572) may be contacted for further information.

**THE SENIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP** (students grades 9-12) enjoyed a Thanksgiving luncheon together and plan to go caroling today with the church. Following the caroling event, they will be going to the Giulianos for food and to socialize. They have a great time being together. For information, call the Giulianos (860.376.8901) or the Van Alsts (860.230.9947). Watch the church bulletin for upcoming activities.

