

THE PRESTON PILGRIM



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

APRIL

CHURCH ADDRESS

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WORSHIP

9:00 & 10:30 A.M.
(Sept. 9 – May 19, 2019)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:45 A.M.
(Sept. 9 – May 19, 2019)

EMAIL: PCCC@SNET.NET

WEBSITE: prestoncitycongregational.org

News and information for the May newsletter must be received by **April 21st**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.



BECAUSE OF EASTER

Eternal death has been defeated -
replaced by
ETERNAL LIFE.
He lives, and so shall I!

BECAUSE OF EASTER

despair has been displaced with
HOPE.

BECAUSE OF EASTER

I have a Friend like no other.
A faithful Friend. A **FOREVER** friend.
With Him I will face life's challenges -
confident that He walks with me.

BECAUSE OF EASTER

Each new day will be **BETTER**
than the day before.
He is my morning, my noontime, my night time.

BECAUSE OF EASTER

I have the promise of an eternal tomorrow.
Alleluia! Amen!

S. White, 2019

Stop for a few minutes and consider Easter.

It's about life and death, not about a ham dinner, Easter egg hunts, baskets full of chocolate candy and peeps. It's about a man (the Son of God) who died on Friday, and rose to life very early on Easter morning. The events he said would take place in the last days of his life happened just as he said: He would be betrayed, suffer, and die. But after three days, He would live again. Christians have believed these truths since that first Easter. He lives today so you and I can live tomorrow... **BECAUSE OF EASTER!**

Stay close to God,
Rev. Stan

DURING THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH

WE WELCOMED INTO THE HOUSEHOLD OF CHRISTIAN FAITH through the Sacrament of Baptism:

- 2/17 *Emmett John Bartlett*, son of Julie & Matthew Bartlett of Brooklyn, CT
- 3/7 *Gillian Cora Sabados*, daughter of Tammy & John Sabados of Norwich, CT
- 3/31 *Eli Lee Griffin*, son of Katie Gileau and Kenneth Griffin of Griswold, CT

WE CONGRATULATED *Angelina Rizzo* and *Christian Saran* who were united in marriage at the American Legion Post 128, Niantic, CT on March 2nd.



WE EXPRESSED OUR SYMPATHY to the family of:

- 3/12 *Justin Nysten*, 34. Justin grew up in our church and was a quiet, yet much-loved child and teen. Four years ago, Justin met the love of his life, Mary; they resided in Maine. Justin's life will be remembered and celebrated in Maine in April. Another celebration of his life will take place here at his home church on June 22nd, at 11 a.m. Please keep his Wife, Mary, and Mom, Sue, along with his brother, Matthew in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.
- 3/8 *Evey Putman*, 91. Evey served her church well! She was involved in many areas of church life during her years among us (serving as Deacon, singing in the choir,

working on the Building Committee). She lived with Parkinson's Disease for the last years of her life. All throughout her life, Evey lived with faith in God. She loved her family, her life, and her church. She will be missed, and fondly remembered.

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MEMORIAL PLAQUE

A beautiful laser engraved plaque of the *Garden of Gethsemane* was created and given in memory of Jack & Evey Putman by their daughter, Mary Lou and her husband John McCarthy. It hangs in the meeting room. Stop by and view it. We thank the McCarthy's for this meaningful memorial gift.

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DOOR MONITORS

Volunteers are needed to monitor the doors on the mid-level during the 10:30 service. Please lend a hand if you are able. All the details pertaining to the responsibilities of a door monitor are posted on the Information Center bulletin board. Contact Lowell Calkins if you have any questions (860.887.5939). *Thanks!*

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Monday morning Bible study has resumed. We're currently enjoying an interesting video series entitled *Follow* by Andy Stanley. He says *No matter what you believe, no matter how you behave, Jesus invites you to... FOLLOW*. We meet on Monday mornings from 10 – 11 a.m. in Halls' Hall. You are welcome to attend whenever you are able. Rev. White leads the group, and the coffee pot is always on! Please bring your Bible if you have one. If you'd like a Bible, speak with Rev. Stan, they are available for *FREE* from the Deacons' Fund.

Tuesday evening Bible Study. Now that the exploration of the Old Testament has been completed, this group which meets at 6:30 p.m. is moving on to the books of the New Testament. Join them, all are welcome. Scott Van Alst leads the group.

PASTORAL EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

At the Annual Meeting in February, the Pastoral Exploratory Committee (PEC) gave an update on what we accomplished over the past year. The results of the survey were presented. The purpose of the survey was to help us align what is important to our congregation with potential candidates for an Interim or Transitional Minister. We really appreciate everyone that took the time to fill it out and turn it in. Overall the results were very positive. **Pastoral leadership** is of utmost importance to the congregation and aligns very well with the level of satisfaction determined by the survey. **Stewardship** is important to the congregation, but the effort to raise awareness and improve participation in supporting the church financially is needed. **Committees and boards** are important to the operation of the church, but the congregation needs to be better informed of what's happening in the church. Possible recommendations/suggestions from the surveys were given to various boards and committees at the March Standing Committee meeting.

We are continuing to explore the best practices for hiring a settled Minister at the time Rev. Stan retires. Our next task will be to complete the Church Informational Form provided by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC). We have added new members to the committee, and are open to any questions or concerns you might have.

The PEC will meet again April 8th.

Sharon Breen and Pat Marino
Co-Chairs of PEC

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ONLINE GIVING NEWS

If you would like to sign up for online giving, you can use your checking account, your savings account, or a debit/credit card. Here's how to sign up:

1. Go to the church website www.prestoncitycongregational.org and click on the green "**Donate Now**" tab on the right side of the home page.

2. If this is your first time on the donation page, click on the "*Create Your Online Profile*" in the lower right corner. Follow the steps to complete your profile and set up a personal password for your account.
3. Once your online profile is set up, click on the green "**Donate Now**" tab and type in your email address and password to access your account. Then follow the steps to add either your checking account number, savings account number, or debit/credit card information. Choose which fund you would like to give to (example: budget), then put in the amount and the frequency. You can make a one-time offering, or a periodic (weekly or monthly) offering. Important note: transactions cannot be processed on Sundays, so choose the following Monday as the processing date.

Additional notes:

- If you would like to make a repeating (i.e. weekly or monthly) offering, just leave the end date blank and your offering will follow the same schedule. You can log into your account any time to change the amount, the frequency, or to stop your offering,
- If you close the bank account or credit/debit card that is on file with your online giving profile, please remember to update your account information.
- In addition to the church website, you can also access your online giving account through the free app on your iPhone, it will prompt you to type in the church name, so type/select Preston City Congregational.

If you have any questions on this process, you can reach Bob Vescovi by phone (401. 583.7840) or email RVesco2010@comcast.net.

We thank those who are already participating in the online giving program. Your financial support of the church is appreciated!

Bob Vescovi
Online Giving Coordinator

MEN'S GROUP

The next meeting of the Men's Group will take place on April 6th, from 8-9:30 a.m. in Hall's Hall. All men of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend. Contact Tim Bowles (860.889.9936) or Ken Sebastian (860.887.4323) for more details. We hope to see you there. +++

WOMEN'S GROUP

The next meeting of the *Women's Fellowship* (new name!) will be Saturday May 4th, from 8-9:30 a.m. in Halls' Hall. Among other things, the group will create a springtime flower pot arrangement to enjoy; the cost is \$5. Women of all ages are welcome and encouraged to attend. Bridget Park is the coordinator for the *Women's Fellowship*. Please contact her if you have any questions (860.710.1316).

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THE LENTEN SEASON

We are in the Lenten season, we have been since Ash Wednesday. There are several more important holy days to be observed and celebrated. We hope you and your family join us for: *New Member Sunday* and *The Annual Bread Festival* to be held following both worship services on *Palm Sunday* (April 14th). This day also marks the first day of *Holy Week*. There will be services on *Maundy Thursday* (April 18th) at 7 p.m. This will be a communion service in the Sanctuary. The next day is *Good Friday*. A service will be held in the Sanctuary beginning at noon.

THEN... It's *Easter!!* We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! There will be a *Sunrise Service* at Amos Lake in Preston (Hollowell Rd.) beginning at 6:30 a.m. An *Easter Breakfast* coordinated by Kim Lang will be served after the sunrise service at 7 a.m. Be sure to sign up to attend the breakfast, reservations are required! A sheet is posted on the mid-level bulletin board. At 9 and 10:30 we will celebrate Easter. The choir will sing at both services, and there will be a special message especially for the children as well. Beautiful memorial lilies will decorate the Sanctuary. You can sign up to have a lily placed on the altar in memory of a loved one on March 31st and April 7th after both services of worship. The cost per lily is \$7, and you can take your lily home following the 10:30 service.

THE ANNUAL BREAD FESTIVAL

This popular Lenten event will be held following both services of worship on Palm Sunday, April 14th. We're asking you to bake your favorite bread and share it with others during the coffee hour. Bring your bread to the church, and it will be sliced up for the special coffee hour that morning. The bread festival reminds us that Jesus IS the "*Bread of Life!*" Evey Putman brought the idea of a bread festival to our church years ago. Please sign the sheet posted on the hallway bulletin board if you are able to bake a bread for that day.

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FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY (FPU)

This most helpful nine-week program will begin April 9th, from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. in Halls' Hall, led by Bob Vescovi. FPU, through the use of DVD's, will cover a variety of topics related to money management: paying down debt, savings and emergency funds, insurance and investing, real estate and mortgages, to name just a few. A scholarship is available for an individual or couple who would like to attend but have limited funds available; please speak with the minister. The cost of the program is \$99. You can attend the first class for free on April 9th. A sign-up sheet is posted on the mid-level bulletin board for anyone interested in attending or obtaining more information. Please call Bob at (401.583.7840) or email him at RVesco2010@comcast.net

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YARD SALE

We'll try to have it again... the "Yard Sale" on Saturday, April 13th, from 8-2 p.m. Say your prayers and cross your fingers (and toes!) that it will be a nice day. No more donations are being accepted at this time. We're filled to overflowing!

A lot of help will be needed on this day. Please lend a hand at 6 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. (or both times). Got questions? Speak with Stella Dawley (860.887.6452).



SPRING CLEAN UP

Join us on April 13th as we get the grounds around the church in shape for spring. We'll start at 8 a.m., and with lots of help we'll be finished in a few hours. Please bring your rakes and brooms. Let us know if you can help. A sign-up sheet is posted on the mid-level bulletin board. Speak with Sr. Trustee Rich Chalifoux if you have questions (860.887.6981).

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MEATLOAF SUPPER

April 27, 4 – 6 p.m.

The menu: meatloaf, mashed potatoes, Harvard beets, green bean casserole, rolls, beverage, and cake. Tickets can be purchased on Sunday mornings during the coffee hours, or from the church office; Adults: \$11, Children under 12: \$6

SEMI ANNUAL MEETING

You are reminded that this meeting will take place in Dudek Hall on April 28th, starting at noon. Everyone is welcome to attend this church meeting, however only church members may vote on matters that arise. Come and hear what's happening in your church. There's a lot going on!

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BOARDS & COMMITTEES

If your term in office finished up in February, and you still have a key to the church, please turn it in to the office so it can be given to the new board or committee member. This includes: Trustees, Decorating/Flower Committee, Deacons, or anyone else no longer serving a position. *Thanks.*

LOCK THE DOORS

Any groups or meetings taking place in the church are encouraged to lock the doors once their meeting or event begins.

-- *The Safety Committee*

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WEB STREAM NEWS

Did you know you can watch the 9 a.m. service "live" online (prestoncitycongregational.org)? Press the web stream icon. If you miss the live-stream at 9, you can view it later in the afternoon or during the week. All services are archived, so you can view any past service any time! Spread the word, tell your family and friends. Of course, for optimum viewing join us in person at 9 or 10:30!

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READING MATERIALS

Copies of *The Upper Room* and *Our Daily Bread* are available on the Information Center table.

These are great daily devotional booklets, written to encourage you in your faith journey. Please pick up a copy, they're "FREE."

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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. If you're interested in helping out with this important outreach, please sign the sheet posted on the mid-level bulletin board, or call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128. *Thank you.*

The Preston Junior Pilgrim



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION...

SUNDAY SCHOOL is an awesome and **important** place to be. But...I do wonder **where have all the children gone???** I am so thankful for all the children we do have, but so many are missing. In a 6th grade class one Sunday recently that has 11 students enrolled, 2 were there. Another week a class of 6 had **NO** students there.

Disheartening, oh yes. But much more than that is the concern that here is a wonderful and free resource for students and parents, but **where are the children?** Is it sports, cheerleading, vacations, not wanting to get up and come? Yes, I do wonder. I look out at my teachers who have prepared a meaningful important lesson and hope they're o.k. with just 2 students. Of course, every one is important.

IF YOUR CHILDREN have been among the missing for any reason, please know that they are missed. It is never too late to come back. We welcome and rejoice whenever they come. I hope you will give serious consideration to your child's Christian Education. I don't have to tell you the kind of world we are living in. Let's equip our children with faith, let them know there is a higher power than "us" who loves and cares for each one.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Proverbs 22:6

I hope to see you and your children this Sunday. What's important to you will be important to them.

May the **SON**shine through me, *Sandy Dudek*

APRIL BIBLE VERSES

Toddler 3 – Grade 2: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

Grades 3-12: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Hopefully you have received the newsletter in your inbox! If you have given us your email address and not received it, please call the office. If you do not have an email address, call the office for a hard copy and we'll see that you get it.



ONE SPOT remains for this year's Youth Mission Trip to the Adirondacks, NY July 14th-19th, 2019. A deposit needs to be given ASAP. Please speak to the VanAlsts if you would like to go. **Present eight graders through those who graduate high school** this year may be eligible to go.



Nicholas Fessenden on getting his *Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering* at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Your family and your church family applaud you for such a wonderful accomplishment!

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS are available on the Information Center table. Students pursuing their first college degree are welcome to complete a scholarship form; applicants **MUST BE** members of the church. Completed forms must be returned to the church office by **noon on April 30th**. Scholarships will be presented **June 9th** during the worship service.

WHO ARE THIS YEAR'S GRADUATES? Please call the church office and let us know so we may send them a congratulations letter.

THE 20TH ANNUAL SPECIAL HOLY WEEK EVENT for kindergarteners through seventh grade is planned for Good Friday, April 19th, from 11:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the Good Friday service at noon, if possible. If not, please drop your child off to attend the service with the Director of Religious Education. Following lunch, the children will participate in a variety of activities to reinforce the meaning of Lent and Easter. The cost is \$5.00, if possible. The registration form has been given to kids at Sunday School and will be emailed this week.

THANK YOU HIGH SCHOOL CLASS for the wonderful favors you made for the March Senior Lunch. The seniors loved them! And a BIG thank you for the "Meals That Heal" that you lovingly make and deliver to shut-ins.

MISSIONS are the focus of the High School Class. Did you know that you should replace your mascara every 2-3 months? The High School Class is collecting old mascara wands to donate to the Wildlife Refuge to assist with cleaning and treatment of rescued animals. Instead of throwing your make-up wands away, please bring them to the box on the information table or to any teen.

POCKETS is an outstanding magazine that the Deacons provide for our children. They contain stories, puzzles, mazes, and so many interesting things for kids. They are available on the Information table.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is scheduled for July 8th-12th. The curriculum will be “**ROAR**” ...**Life is wild – God is Good**; it is put out by Group Publishing. We are making plans for 50 kids. This is the **highlight** of th summer for many kids. It is so much fun and a very special time of learning in a variety of ways.

Children in our church and community who have turned 4 by August 1, 2019, through those completing Grade 7 are invited to attend (**Exception: those who have attended our Toddler 3 Sunday School may also sign up to attend**). Those who have completed grades 8-12 could assist us in so many ways. The cost for this program is \$12.00 per child with a family maximum of \$30.00. Checks should be made payable to Preston City Congregational Church and can be mailed to the church office at any time. Scholarships are available; speak to Sandy Dudek.

It will be directed by Shari Purcell and Sandy Dudek.

COPIES OF THE ANNUAL REPORT are available on the Information Table.

THE SCRIP PROGRAM is an ongoing fundraiser that greatly benefits the youth missions trips program. Scrip (debit) cards are available to purchase for hundreds of stores, gas stations, donut shops, bookstores, grocery stores, etc. where you do business. You do not pay any extra amount to purchase these cards; however, the youth missions will receive a percentage back that varies according to the business. For example...if you purchase a Macy’s card for \$100.00, youth missions will be rewarded 10% for the sale...no charge to you, but profit to the program; WalMart is 2%, Stop & Shop 4%, etc. Cards can be purchased for varying amounts. Sheets with participating businesses listed are available in the Information Center. Checks to purchase these cards should be made out to “**PCCC Youth Missions**”. If you have questions, call coordinators Jerry & Cheryl Giuliano (860.376-8901).

ENVELOPES similar to those the adults use for worship are available to the children. Please ask me if you’d like a box for your child. The Sunday School is self-supporting so even if your child attends church in the summertime, when the offering is placed in a Sunday School envelope, it is given to the Board of Religious Education treasurer.

May you have a
BLESSED EASTER!

April 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Kidz Praise meets Sunday mornings in Room 13 from 10-10:25a	1 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	2 Handbells 6p RE Board 6p Scarecrow Festival Mtg. 6:30p Bible study 6:30p	3 AA 7:30p	4 Adult choir 7p	5	6 Men's Group 8-9:30a Eagle Scout Ceremony 11a
7 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Choir sings 9a New members meeting noon	8 Bible study 10a Pastoral Exploratory Committee 6p Yoga 6:30p	9 Handbells 6p Bible study 6:30p Financial Peace University 6:30p	10 St. Jude Worship 11a AA 7:30p	11 Adult choir 7p	12	13 Spring clean-up 8a Yard sale 8a-2p
14 Palm Sunday New Members Sunday 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a	15 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	16 Bible study 6:30p Financial Peace University 6:30p	17 No Trustees or Standing Committee Meetings Adult choir 7p AA 7:30p	18 Maundy Thursday Communion Worship 7p	19 Good Friday Worship Noon Holy Week Event for Children 11:45a-2:30p	20
EASTER! Sunrise service 6:30a Amos Lake If rain, PCCC Easter breakfast 7a NO Sunday School Worship 9, 10:30a	22 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	23 Bible study 6:30p Financial Peace University 6:30p	24 Creamery Brook 3p AA 7:30p	25 Adult choir 7p	26	27 Meatloaf Supper 4-6p
28 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Semi-annual meeting Noon Food Distribution Sunday	29 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	30 Bible study 6:30p Financial Peace Univ. 6:30p Deadline for Scholarship applications	Please note: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (tables, chairs) call the church office. TO PLACE FLOWERS in church during April, sign the Flower Chart, fill out the Reservation form and call Doreen Mainville (860) 639-4500.			

LOST OR FOUND something at church? There is a basket in the Information Center.

THE NEWSLETTER is posted on our website: prestoncitycongregational.org

THE 9:00 A.M. service is web streamed.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE to use Rev. Stan or Sandy as a reference, please consult them first.