



THE LITTLE PILGRIM

*A weekly update of church happenings for
Preston City Congregational Church
Week of May 18, 2020*

Have a question? Need help?

Please call:
The Office
860.887.4647 or 860.886.7200

During this unusual time in Connecticut, our country and our world, we want to be available to you should you need something. Call the office between 9 and noon and we'll do our best to help you. Numerous people in the congregation have graciously volunteered to pick up items at the store and deliver them to those who are not able to help themselves.

WEB STREAM SERVICES

Until church life returns to "normal," and we can resume worship in our Sanctuary, services may be viewed *live* on the church website: prestoncitycongregational.org at 9 AM, or later in the day via the archive system also on the site. We hope you'll tune in for the service this Sunday. Why not tell your friends about it? Did you know that 140 viewers tuned in from 24 states and 3 countries last Sunday? Were you one of them?



From the Minister

I think a lot about what God must be thinking in these times; what He wants us to know about Him and about LIFE, about things that truly matter, and things we *should* value. I imagine God watching us to see how faithful we will be to Him. Are we sticking with Him when all around us the world is changing due to an out-of-control virus? I wonder if God is up there thinking, "Will my people, whom I love remain faithful to Me in these troubling times?" A line from a Bette Midler song comes to mind; "God is watching us, from a distance."

I believe He is watching us, BUT, not from a distance. He is closer to us than we think, or can imagine. And He remains faithful to us, especially today. Like an earthly parent who loves and cares for a child, God IS watching over you. Do not doubt it. Believe it.

We've been apart from each other for just over two months now. Do you think about God? Are you praying to Him, seeking answers to your questions, asking for help, guidance, and strength to face each new day? Are you thanking Him for the beauty that is still so visible in your daily life? Like Hummingbirds, springtime colors, the song of the birds early in the morning, sunny warm days? "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6). Are you Praising (thanking) God daily for keeping watch over you and those you love? Are you remaining as faithful to Him as He is to you?

My prayer is that one day when this virus is defeated or becomes manageable, that churches will be filled to overflowing with people who are grateful to God for His commitment and faithfulness to them.

I can't wait to see you again!
Rev. Stan

YOUR OFFERINGS and ONLINE GIVING

We cannot thank you enough for the financial support we have been receiving from the members and friends of the church. Your giving has helped tremendously in paying the ongoing monthly expenses of our church. It makes a difference, and we so appreciate it! As you know, our Financial Secretary (Sue Creamer) collects all offerings on Friday and deposits them in the bank in a timely manner. Be assured, if you give online, your contribution will be credited to your pledge. Thank you for remembering your church. Contact Bob Vescovi with questions: RVesco2010@comcast.net or (401) 583.7840.

BIBLE STUDY

Scott Van Alst, Pastor of Second Congregational Church, Griswold is leading a study on Galatians. The group meets via ZOOM on Tuesday nights from 7-8 P.M. Please call or email Scott if you'd like to attend: 860.237.7964 or scottv916@gmail.com. He will send you the invitation information needed to get on ZOOM.





NEED FOOD?

Please contact the church office and arrangements will be made for food to be picked up. We appreciate the many financial contributions and donations of food that have been dropped off at the pantry since the pandemic first began. There are many kind-hearted people in our church and community. *Thank you!*

WHAT AN AMAZING SURPRISE IT WAS...

as I left the church doors last Sunday following the web stream service, on my last Sunday as your Director of Religious Education! Dozens of cars (I am told 150) filled the parking lot decorated with posters and balloons and tooting up CELEBRATION! What an honor you bestowed upon me – something I could never have imagined. It was complete with a beautiful replica of the church built for me by George & Susan Mattern, along with Channel 3’s presence, and most especially my church family and my family nearby.

Riley Stankiewicz, Brock Nowakowski, and Jack Zachem, three of my students, read heartwarming tributes as well as my youngest daughter, Heather Gerteisen who presented a meaningful presentation on behalf of my family. How blessed could I get for doing my passion here for 29 years. I have so many memories and so appreciate all of you, near and far, who took the time to write for my memory book. The generosity of your gifts and the uniqueness of many of them was so touching! You will be hearing from me when I simmer down enough to write my notes!

SO TODAY I say thank you one and all for being there for me. The Board of Religious Education led by Lisa Fessenden and Rev. Stan, may God bless you for what you did. You didn’t miss a beat!

Whether I am DRE or not, I will always be there to hear about your lives, your joys and your struggles, you are important to me. It is a BIG time of transition for me right now. I am praying for an end to the pandemic, but know God has us all in His hands, and beautiful things will unfold in His time. “BE PATIENT” (James 5:7a).

BEST WISHES to Lisa Van Alst who replaces me. I hope she’s ready for an amazing journey! God bless you!

Sandy Dudek

FREE SERVSAFE FOOD HANDLER ONLINE COURSE AND EXAM

Go online and fill out a profile to take FREE Food Safety Training. Here is the link:

<https://www.servsafe.com/Landing-Pages/Free-Courses>

Some people took the course last fall and paid \$25.

You must sign up by **May 31st**, you have up to one year to launch, and 60 days to complete once started. Taking the course will be well worth it. Call the office if you have any questions. *Sandy*

BOOKS AND MORE BOOKS!

The Standing Committee recently voted to close our church library, and repurpose the room as an office for the Director of Religious Education (DRE), Lisa Van Alst. All of the books that were once on the shelves are now on tables at the back of Dudek Hall. The congregation is welcome to look over the books (adult & children’s books) and take up to 5 books (for now) home. There will be a money box near the books if you’d like to give a donation for the books you take, however, it is not necessary. We really want the books to go to good homes. If you’re interested in looking them over, please call the office and we’ll arrange a time to let you in.

THE FINAL WORD

TRY GOD

*When troubles are deep and your world is dark,
don’t give up hope, “TRY GOD” ...*

*When life turns sour and you’ve lost your way,
don’t give up hope, “TRY GOD” ...*

*When fears stack up and you’re sure no one cares,
don’t give up hope, “TRY GOD” ...*

*When temptation comes knocking and you struggle with
it so,*

don’t give up hope, “TRY GOD”...

(Submitted by Stella Dawley)

YOUR TURN

Got a *brief* and encouraging message to share with your church family during this time? Send it to me:

SEWhite3022@gmail.com and you may see your

message in next week’s *Little Pilgrim*.

111 Questions & Answers Concerning the Pilgrims

written by our own William “Bill” Muttart is on sale in the church office for \$17. Each book is autographed, and all proceeds will go to the church budget. We thank Bill for his kindness and generosity to the church!