

Preston City Congregational Church



**Week of November 21, 2021 –
November 28, 2021**

Church Office Hours:
Monday – Friday, 9AM – Noon

**Have a question?
Need help?**

Please call: The Office
860.887.4647 or 860.886.7200

WORSHIP AND WEB STREAM INFORMATION

Worship services at 9AM & 10:30AM.
For those who are unable to attend in-
person, the 9AM service is streamed
live. Go to

prestoncitycongregational.org. and
click the stream button. Previous
services may be viewed using the
archive system on the site.

Live viewings: 45; countries -1; states
-14; cities -31; Archives last week:110

UPCOMING EVENTS

Confirmation Class Tu. 6:30PM

AA Wed. -7:30PM Dudek Hall

Bible Study Thu. -10AM

Women's Fellowship Sat. 12/4
9AM

BRE Basket Drawing Sun. 12/12

Coat Drive 11/14-12/12

REMINDER Effective 8/18/21 and
until further notice, for the safety of all
church-goers, we **strongly**
recommend that **everyone wear a**
mask inside the church as suggested
by the Center for Disease Control and
Prevention (CDC) and the
Southeastern Connecticut Council of
Governments (SECCOG). **This applies**
to both those vaccinated and
unvaccinated, who were previously
requested to wear masks indoors.

NEW MEMBERS were welcomed into
the church on November 21st, during
the 9:00 AM service of worship. They
are Mark Day, Loida Fessenden and
Reverend Raefield Pertee.

Pastor's Corner

Discovering the Secrets of Joy

"There is only one piece of advice I can give you," says the wisest of wise men. "The secret of happiness is to see all the marvels of the world and to never forget the drops of oil on the spoon." (The Alchemist)

I have always found there to be a profound beauty in this excerpt taken from the Alchemist above; here the traveler arrives at a grand palace seeking wisdom. In order to prove he is worthy to receive this precious gift, he is given the task of taking a spoon with a few droplets of oil and walking all around the palace, preserving the oil on the spoon. The traveler does just that, but initially he misses all of the grandeur of the imported rugs, the magnificently detailed paintings that hung on the walls, or the majestic waterfall... He is asked to try again, and this time to observe the marvels of the palace that were missed the first time. He arrives back a final time, having seen the marvels and eager to tell of the marvels he captured with his eyes this time around, when the wise man asked him, "but what of the droplets of oil you lost?" The lesson is one of balanced priorities.

You know, in our modern culture, it feels like we have forgotten this simple but profound truth to living a fulfilled and joyful life. When did our society become so obsessed with the marvels of the world? We are crazed with more, much more, so much so that our politics have become reality tv, national disasters or tragedies are only tragic for a truncated 48-hour news cycle until the next big thing arrives, and to top it all, social media has insidiously become humanities' moral frenemy. We, on-mass, have become over-stimulated spectators, forgetting that the wonders or "marvels" we experience by themselves are inadequate for maintaining joy, unless filtered through a deep ethos of personal understanding and reflection.

This week I was reminded of the necessity of this balance. When amid the business of this season, life threw in one of its colorful distractions at the family. Initially, this was met with the understandable frustration of having too much to do to be slowed by such an unnecessary distraction.

Although when considering closer, perhaps life sometimes offers distractions as a time to pause from the busyness of life or to refocus on what is really meaningful and important. Regarding interruptions, we really have no choice; they come to us all. But regarding how we interpret them, there we have all the choice in the world; we can get angry and upset, or we can grow attentive and say, "God, are you trying to get my attention?" You see, I am convinced we all do it: we become so distracted on the treasures or necessity of busy life "working ourselves to death" as Alabama Shakes would term it, that sometimes we forget to manage those drops of oil on the spoon. Those little details that seem small and insignificant at first but are absolutely vital to the soul's nourishment, such as self-care, spiritual enrichment, and time with friends and family.

This holiday season, amid the busyness of life, would you take a portion of every day to stop, pause, and reflect, to be mindful of the tiny drops of oil? To consider what really provides joy in this season and, once discovered, be bold enough to share that truth and special gift with another.

Wishing you a balanced and joyful season!

Rev. Rae



Attention all 6th-12th graders, you are invited to attend the 2022 Mission Trip. This July the Youth Mission Trip will be heading out to Charleston, WV. We need you! We will be traveling Saturday July 16th then spending the night camping under the stars, continuing Sunday the 17th. We will stay at a church in Charleston until Friday July 22nd. Friday we leave for a campsite at KOA, set up camp, enjoy a campfire, s'mores, and fellowship. We finally return Saturday, July 23rd! Total cost to families is \$175 made in monthly payments. Come see me for more information.

All Sunday school kids, I need help on Christmas Eve. We have a Children's service @ 4p.m. We will be retelling the First Christmas, no speaking parts, just acting!
We also need 3rd graders and older to be in the bell choir. All practices will be 10-15 minutes long right after the first service on Sundays. If any parents would like to help, please contact me! It takes a village.

Lisa Van Alst DRE
email dre.prestoncity@gmail.com
or call 860-710-1262.

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

Confirmation class is meeting Tuesday from 6-7PM.
Coffee Hour has resumed following Sunday services.

Did you know for a number of years now Tiffany Barry has been creating the baptismal cloths that have gone on so many babies that have been baptized? Occasionally, we need someone to hem these baptismal cloths. We are looking for someone to do the hemming around the edges of these. If you can help, call the office (860 887-4647).



THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP will be writing Christmas cards at their meeting December 4 at 9AM.



THE ADULT CHOIR rehearses on Thursdays at 7PM in Halls' Hall.

MEMORIAL POINSETTIAS

Is there someone you wish to remember this Christmas season? We will be placing memorial Poinsettias on the altar on Christmas Sunday, December 19. The names will be included in the Sunday bulletin.



The cost of the poinsettias are \$12.00 apiece. We will be collecting the money on Sunday, November 28, Sunday, December 5, and Sunday, December 12. Forms will be available after the services and during coffee hour. If you have any questions, you can call or text Wendy Zajac at 860-705-8176 or Sharon Breen at 860-303-1184. Payments may also be left with the office.

Payment must be received by Sunday, December 12 so we can give a count to the greenhouse.

THE BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



BASKET DRAWING on DECEMBER 12TH

Tickets will be available November 28 & December 5 after services.
Tickets are 2/\$1 or an arm's length (12)/\$5
Check our Facebook page or website for photos of the baskets:

Questions? Call Chairperson Wendy Abrahamson at 860-908-5020 or email wabrahamson@sbcglobal.net.

THE MEMORY TREE... Rev. Rae will be putting up the Christmas tree and lights for this Sunday, November 28. The only thing missing will be the ornaments!
We invite you to place an ornament from your tree on our tree, in memory of a loved one. Be sure to write your last name on the ornament, then fill out the memorial form located by the tree and place it in the box. We'll list all memorials in the worship folder through December 12th. You can remove your ornament from the tree on *December 26th*.



A COAT DRIVE is being held from November 14th - December 12th. Boots, hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves are also needed.

The items can be left in or on the Elizabeth Allyn box located to the right of the table in the mid-level hallway.

A NOTE FROM THE CHURCH CLERK

The Bylaw Committee will be meeting soon to review our church bylaws. Church members are welcome to submit any proposed bylaw change, consideration, or amendment, **stated in writing**, to a committee member. You can mail it to the church office (ATTN: Clerk), or email it to Clerk@prestoncitycongregational.org by November 30th. Any changes agreed upon by the committee will be presented to the Standing Committee for preliminary review, comments and suggestions, before presentation to the membership for final approval at the Annual Meeting in February 2022.

Susan Brosnan, Clerk

LITTLE PILGRIM COORDINATOR

Please send information to be included in the newsletter no later than Tuesday at noon each week:

Susan.brosnan@gmail.com or 860 889-0768.

LOOKING FOR AN ADVENT ACTIVITY FOR YOUR FAMILY?

Consider the following example and make it your own. Every day add something to a box to donate to our Food Pantry!



THE LAST WORD

November 28 is the first Sunday of Advent

**We light the Prophecy (or Prophets) Candle,
the first in our Advent Wreath.**

The candle is purple and symbolizes

HOPE



What is it that you hope for this holiday season?

If others have something to share, words of wisdom, (or perhaps a joke or cartoon!), please contact Sue Brosnan

CHURCH MEMBERS will vote December 12th at the end of the 9AM service and the **beginning** of the 10:30AM service to disburse mission funds to the following local and overseas programs:

Missions Committee Recommendations For 2021 Giving		
National Association – Missions fund	\$800 (2 @\$250, 1 @\$300)	
<i>Word Alive Missions (Rev. Charles Nyane)</i>	\$300	<i>Western Ghana/ Ivory Coast based Mission</i>
<i>Piedmont College</i>	\$250	<i>Congregational College</i>
<i>Olivet College</i>	\$250	<i>Congregational College</i>
NACCC Hurting Churches Fund	\$250	Builds new Churches and helps Churches in need
Congregational Library	\$350	Congregational Library in Boston
Gideons International	\$250	Bible Distribution
Missionary Flights International	\$250	Missions Air Support
Heifer Project International	\$250	Income-Producing Animals
American Red Cross Disaster Relief	\$350	Relief to Disaster Victims / Connecticut Chapter
Salvation Army	\$350	Norwich Chapter / Charity
Madonna Place	\$400	Supports Local Families
St. Vincent de Paul	\$400	Soup Kitchen
Safe Futures	\$400	Transitional Housing and Assistance for Domestic Violence
Martin House	\$400	Housing for homeless with addiction or mental health problems
Senior Luncheon	\$300	Luncheon / Church Seniors
Sunday School Outreach	\$400	VBS, Good Friday / Sunday School Outreach
Total	\$5,150	
The Missions Committee would like to thank the Congregation for your generosity; your support made this possible.		