

**Preston City
Congregational Church**



**Week of December 5, 2021 -
December 12, 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: 43; countries -2; states
-14; cities -43; Archives last week:170

UPCOMING EVENTS

Confirmation Class Tu. 6:30PM

AA Wed. 7:30PM Dudek Hall

Bible Study Thu. 10AM

Missions Disbursements Vote

12/12

BRE Basket Drawing 12/12

Coat Drive ends 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.

Pastor's Corner

Happy Holidays

What a wonderful joy to share a part of my Christmas joy with you. As we get ready to spend our Christmas with all the usual traditions that infuse this magical time of year. As we prepare our own hearts for the miracle of God's love, I imagine you are too; perhaps you have been revisiting Handel's Messiah, unpacking cozy sweaters, or enjoying the occasional sip of eggnog. With all these preparations it is difficult to ignore just how transformative this season really is for all those who choose to lean into it. Whether leaning into traditions or making new ones, these traditions often remind us of the positive illumination of human kindness, love and joy; a mere reflection of the divine. Yes, this season can indeed feel magical!

For us, one of our favorite traditions to celebrate during the holidays has been having an opportunity to view all of the beautiful Christmas lights. A few years ago, we were doing just that on a particularly celebratory neighborhood, when, for a moment, I found myself concentrating on the few houses that were dark and opting out of this tradition. "Why did they opt out?" I thought "nearly the whole street is participating!" And then I caught myself amid so many splendidly decorated homes focusing on the ones that were not. I found myself focusing on the dark places.

Perhaps my discovery is also a truism in life that it is possible, even easy, to slip into this mentality; to be so overwhelmed by the darkness of life's woes and many distractions that we fail to focus on the beauty that shines all around us. Instead, if not mindful, we can often dismiss sporadic moments of joy and beauty as merely being incidental flukes in a sea of darkness. This Christmas, I challenge you to look towards the splendor of the light that shines all around you.

Although this can be seen in the faces of loved ones, it can also be seen, albeit with a bit more difficulty, on the faces of persons shopping for last minute gifts. It can be felt even with the absence of loved ones. After all, as Psalms 34:18 reminds us, it is in our grief and pain that God is most near. And this is the mystery of the season, that just like Christ's birth in a wooden stable God often chooses to shine his light of wonder in the most peculiar of places. Even in the hectic hustle and bustle of the holiday season, if we look closely enough, we will find it. Therefore, I challenge you to gaze with wide-eyed wonder and to give thanks for the light of God's love that burns bright and eternal in our lives.

This holiday season I pray that God's light of love and hope continues to shine brightly in your own lives and homes. I also hope you will plan to join PCCC and be a part of our Christmas Eve service, either our family service at 4pm or our candlelight service held at 11pm. Come celebrate a service of Christmas cheer and carols together with us.

From my heart to yours, Merry Christmas!

Rev. Rae

SUNDAY DECEMBER 26 is the last Sunday for 2021 giving. All monies received after December 30 will be credited to 2022.
Please keep these dates in mind, especially if you mail your offerings



Welcome to the 3rd week of Advent!!! We light the pink, angel candle. In all the hustling and craziness, let's take time to feel and spread JOY. Take a moment to just sit and listen to the conversations around you, hear the words to the music 🎵. See the pure radiant Joy of everyone around you waiting for Christmas, and then radiate that feeling to others. Smile, share, sing, and hug. Even in the darkness there is JOY in knowing our loving GOD.

I would love to have a Children's Bell choir this Christmas Eve. I need at least 4 ringers or as many as 8! We only need to practice the last 5-10 minutes of Sunday school! 4th thru High School this is you.... Let me know.

Love,
Mrs. Van Alst

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

Confirmation class is meeting Tuesday at 6:30PM.
Coffee Hour has resumed following Sunday services.

Occasionally, we need someone to hem baptismal cloths. We are looking for someone to do the hemming around the edges of these, with a simple straight stitch. If you can help, call the office (860 887-4647).

Several of you have called the office for Rev. Stan's address:
3071 Indian River Drive
Palm Bay, FL 32905

An important notice from the office:

It has been brought to our attention that several times the church doors have been left unlocked. If you are here, please be sure the doors are locked before you leave unless you have made arrangements for someone else to do it. It is important that each one of us does their part in keeping our building secured. Thank you



THE BIBLE STUDY plans to meet on December 16th at 10AM for a reflection on the Christmas narrative. In the upcoming year, a new study will begin. – Rev. Rae

GENEROSITY ABOUNDS...

This past Monday, December 6th, I was coming into my office when I noticed two people who were picking up trash off our lawns. They were dressed for this job, reflective vests and all. I went to inquire who they were and found they were Russell and Winifred Fishkin who reside on Prodele Road. Since retirement (8 years), this couple nearing their 80's, has done this task all over Preston, at all the town churches and VFW, as well as town roads. They walk 5 to 6 miles every day. Winifred has also knitted 100 pairs of mittens for the pantry. They sure are an inspiration to me!

The same morning, Jan Fuller, from our congregation, brought in a bag of hats and some fingerless gloves she had knitted for the pantry.

Then, our own Harriet Rosiene, came in with more scarves and hats; in fact, a whole tote of them. Just good people doing what they can to make this world a better place. We thank them for their generosity. I am wondering if there are mornings they just don't feel like getting up, but get up and start serving anyway!!! May God bless them.

Sandy Dudek



CONGRATULATIONS to Hunter Bustamante who will begin work at Disney World on January 7th.

CONGRATULATIONS to Hayden Bustamante who passed his audition (right here at PCCC!) for the Army Military Band! He will leave for boot camp January 2nd.

A reception is being planned for Sunday December 26th, immediately following the 9 a.m. service, a day that we have only one service.

I hope you will mark it on your calendar to attend and express your appreciation for all that they have done. If you cannot attend but wish to send a card, you may send it to the office and I'll be sure they get it that day.
-Sandy Dudek



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

No experience necessary, just an enthusiasm for singing.
-Marie Quinn



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 of those honored will be included in the Sunday bulletin.

The cost of the poinsettias are \$12.00 apiece. We will be collecting the money on 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. Poinsettias may be picked up after the 10:30AM service on December 19.

CHURCH CANCELLATIONS

When the decision is made that church or Sunday School must be cancelled, usually due to inclement weather, please tune into television Channel 3, call the church office (860 887-4647) for a recorded message, check our Facebook page or the website (prestoncitycongregational.org). If an event needs to be cancelled, that, too, will be posted as above. Please

OUR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES will include the Children's' Service at 4:00PM and the candlelight service at 11PM.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26 there will be one service at 9AM.

THE LAST WORD

December 12th is the third Sunday of Advent and we light the Angel Candle, the third in our Advent Wreath.

The candle is pink and symbolizes

JOY

THE MEMORY TREE... The tree is up and the lights are on! The only thing missing is 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 may remove your ornament from the tree on *December 26th*.



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

The items may be left in or on the Elizabeth Allyn box located to the right of the table in the mid-le



THE BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

BASKET DRAWING DECEMBER 12TH

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.

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.		