

Preston City Congregational Church



**Week of April 24, 2022 -
May 1, 2022**

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 last week: 18; 1 country;
6 states; 14 cities. Archived viewing: 165

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday Evening Bible Study 7P
AA Wed. 7:30P Dudek Hall
Adult Choir Practice Thursday 7P

Communion Sunday 5/01
Sunday School Bake Sale 5/08
Bingo Strawberry Park 5/07
Spring Yard Sale 5/07
Children's Day Service & Picnic
5/15
Fellowship Gathering of the
Northeast Congregational
Churches 5/15
Summer Service 5/22 at 9:30A

COFFEE HOUR and FELLOWSHIP
follows Sunday services.

COVID UPDATE 3/16/2022

The Standing Committee has
determined that wearing masks is
optional.

MAY 22 – SEPTEMBER 4
Summer Schedule with one
service on Sundays at 9:30A.

Pastor's Corner

Don't Be Afraid, Go Forward

On a relatively recent trip, the person returning the rental vehicle in front of me hesitated. He then paused and even exited the car to double check the position of the traffic spikes in the road ahead of him, to make sure they were pointed in the right direction. I watched it all, frustrated as I was in line behind him, waiting to return my own rental car. In my own mind, I shouted at him, "Don't be afraid, just go forward!" Thank God, he didn't stop for long or decide to reverse direction.

Isn't this true in life? Sometimes, we get right to the edge of a promise, a promotion at work, an important conversation, or a career path change... and then we hesitate! We stop, or worse, we reverse direction. However, for the believer, this is where their faith comes in handy. But, what is faith? Well, scripture says that "*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" (Hebrews 11:1)

I didn't feel the need to hesitate when it was my turn to return my own rental car. Nor did I feel the need to exit the car and check the physical evidence closer. I didn't hesitate, partly because I had been through the process many times before. But of greater importance, I was able to trust the clearly delineated signage. One sign read, "ENTER HERE," and the other read, "5 MPH DON'T BACK UP, SEVERE TIRE DAMAGE" in bold green lettering.

Similarly, as people of faith, we are also commanded to trust in a certain celestial, bold lettering. We are called upon to take the bold guidance found in the word of God, the hopeful, wise counsel set up around us, and our own inward knowing, using it all to illuminate our path. Yet, at times, the fear of what lies in front of us, the possible losses we would face if we misread the direction of the road spikes in our own life's journey, is enough to cause us a bit of hesitation.

Often, we start out strong in our belief that a given path is the right one for our lives, but then a bit of doubt creeps in for us all. We thought we read the signage right. In fact, we know we read it right. RIGHT? It's that "what if," that gives us pause. It's the potential loss of tire pressure, the loss of time, money, or the loss of meaning in our lives that often allows fear to gain a foothold in our hearts and minds. We hesitate, we stop, we sometimes stay too long at a particular decision point. And, God forbid, there are even those times when we reverse direction and turn around completely.

However, this week I want to encourage you. I want to shout into your spirit a few simple words. If you have prayed and considered God's best, if you have consulted good friends and family, if you have searched your own heart, if you have done all of this, and you are still hesitating at one of life's tricky road spikes, I want to share with you one important phrase that I hope will echo in your soul for weeks to come-"DON'T BE AFRAID, JUST GO FORWARD!"

Remaining in the Light,

Rev. Rae



Sunday School Families check those emails!

ABRAHAM'S BIRTHDAY BASH BAKE SALE is only 2 weeks away, on **SUNDAY, MAY 8TH**. High School families can help with set up, participating, and clean-up. The rest pray for Abraham and his village, spread the word about the bake sale, and come with a sweet tooth! ANYONE, is encouraged to bake & create treats to sell. All monies raised pays the \$35.00 monthly fee to World Vision to help not only Abraham, but his entire village. Come learn more about Abraham and wish him a Happy Birthday by helping to keep his sponsorship going through the summer.

Children's Day 2022 is Sunday May 15th @ 10:30

service. All Sunday School children, their friends, & families are invited to our service, and church wide picnic to follow. Children vs. the Grown-ups games, bubbles, chalk, hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, lemonade and cupcakes will all be available in the field of dreams! Come learn about summer fun dates, Vacation Bible School, and next fall's Sunday School enrollment! Summer sneak peek save the dates.....

VBS July 11 - 15th ages 3 w/adult - 6th grade

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION WEEKEND..... July 15th - 17th 6th graders - 12th graders

Church Day of Service..... July 16th

10:00a.m. - 3:00p.m. EVERYONE!

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

Refunds are available through the church office if you purchased tickets for the Meatloaf Dinner which has been postponed.

HELPING HANDS MINISTRY

No requests this week.

Check again next week.

We are here if you need us!



REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN... a special service where we remember children who are no longer with us, will be held **Sunday, May 15th** at the **9:00 service**. If you wish to have a child's name included in the worship folder that morning, you must call the office by Tuesday, May 10th. Likewise, if you would like to donate \$5 toward the purchase of Marigolds, please let the office know by the 10th. Those donating these summer flowers are invited to take a pack with them following the service.



ADULT CHOIR

Choir Rehearsal is on Thursday evenings at 7pm. -Marie Quinn



BIBLE STUDY

The Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group will continue @7pm for the next 4-5 weeks. Our new study will be "Why Easter Matters" from Andy Stanley. It is video based and comes with a study guide that is available on Amazon for ~\$10 or a Kindle version for around \$5. The class is available in person in Hall's Hall or on Zoom by clicking on the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9038488535?pwd=SHFJbVZS2JWOGVGaUMxTllmWXdkdz09>

For more information, please contact Scott Van Alst by phone (860-237-7964).

Thursday Morning Bible Study will begin in May. Hope you will join us for a new study as we talk on the subject "Heroes of the faith" details to follow shortly.

FINAL WEEK

SPECIAL GIVING for UKRAINE

We will be accepting monetary donations to support Ukraine throughout the month of April.



If you wish to give to this appeal, please put your gift in an envelope marked "**Ukraine**", then mail it, drop it off to the church office, or place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

When issuing a check, please add "**Ukraine**" to the memo line.

We will be donating through the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC). *Thank you!*

THOUGHTS FROM A FRIEND...

Do everything with a good heart and expect nothing in return and you will never be disappointed.

The Men's Group will be hosting a Mother's Day Light Brunch with donuts, juice and coffee following both



MEN'S GROUP

services on Sunday, May 8th as we all try to get back to whatever the new normal is. All are welcome.

We would also like to invite all men who might be interested to the next men's group meeting on Saturday, June 4th at 10:00 AM. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions you may have. Tim Bowles

tbowles117@comcast.net

860-705-5613 (cell)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORMS

Application forms for the church scholarship awards are now available to students pursuing their first college or university degree. Call the office and leave your name and phone number and we'll mail you the paperwork which needs to be completed and **returned** to the church office **by April 30th**. Forms are also available on the table in the mid-level hallway.



MOTHER'S DAY GERANIUMS

The Decorating Committee is looking forward to Mother's Day, May 8. We will be available to take your orders to honor or remember your mothers on May 1st during coffee hours after both services. Geraniums will be **\$10.00** apiece. Any questions, please see Sharon Breen (860-303-1184) or Wendy Zajac (860-886-1588). Thanks!



YARD SALE

Our **SPRING YARD SALE** is planned for **May 7th from 8A – 2P**.

Rain date is May 14th.

Start cleaning those basements and attics!

Please call Stella Dawley to arrange a drop-off time. Sign-up sheets have been posted for help setting up at 6:30A and 1:30P to clean-up. Also, please remember: no computers, tires, air conditioners or clothing.



THE FOOD PANTRY'S ANNIVERSARY was last Sunday, when it was 13 years to the day that the pantry opened. Two faithful workers came forward to co-chair this endeavor, **STELLA DAWLEY** and **HARRIET ROSIENE**. And Sunday

was the day to recognize them as they were both presented with bouquets of flowers, tokens of the many years they have served.

Rev. Stanley White, our pastor at the time, noticed an increase in the number of requests the church was receiving for financial assistance, as well as food assistance. Noting the current financial difficulties that had affected many families, Rev. Stan felt there was something the congregation could do.

With the help of many parishioners, the Food Pantry Outreach program opened its doors on April 24, 2009. That's when Stella and Harriet came to the forefront.

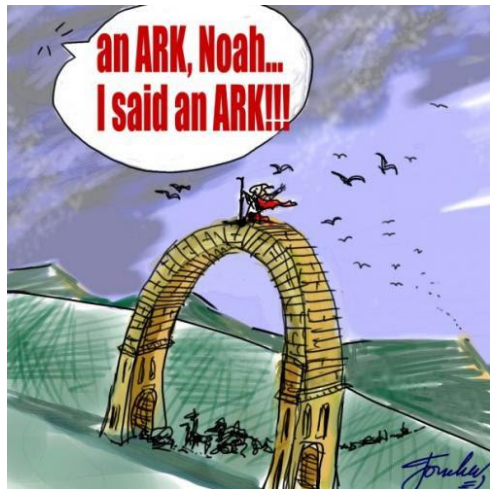
The symbol of the pantry was and still is the toucan, "to encourage the congregation to bring in at least "two cans" on Sundays, so that when you come to church you'll be thinking of your neighbor."

Twenty-five bags of non-perishable food items were put together to be distributed to families in need within the community and surrounding towns. Items are collected from month-to-month in boxes placed throughout the town, and of course, in our church. In addition to non-perishables, fruits and vegetables are at times available, as well as eggs. The support of this program is phenomenal, as Stella or Harriet could tell you. The many financial contributions from the church family as well as others in the community continue to come often, making it possible for our clients to receive special items for holiday meals.

Bob Vescovi, Dwight Hopkins, Betsy Hopkins, Laurie Bowers, Judy Webster, and Mary Ryan, as well as many others, have come forward through the years to lend a hand to this program.

Thank you to God who has had His hand over us for so many years to help make our endeavors successful!

Sandy Dudek



COMMUNION SUNDAY IS TWO-CAN SUNDAY: Time to replenish the Toucan Food Pantry on May 1st.

Always needed: cereal, peanut butter, jelly, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned soup, rice, macaroni and cheese, pasta, and spaghetti sauce. Donation boxes are located at both entry doors.

Thank you for your continuing support for this vital ministry.





THE FELLOWSHIP GATHERING OF THE NORTHEAST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES is being held here at our church on **Sunday, May 15th** from 3:00- 6:30 p.m. This is the first in-person meeting since the beginning of the pandemic! All are invited to attend. The FNCCC is made up of 34 churches in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island. Participants are church members (like you and me) and Pastors of these churches, who offer support, nurture, and care to one another, while also sharing resources to further the building of God's kingdom on earth. If you've never been to one before, why not come and check it out? Among us this year will be The National Association's Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere; how special!

Here is the agenda for the day:

- 3:00 p.m. Gathering and Missionary Tea (and coffee)
- 3:30 p.m. Executive Director of NA, Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere – words of greeting and vision
- 4:15 p.m. Cofounders of Bombyx Center for Arts and Equity – sharing the ideas and vision for the Florence Congregational Church space
- 5:00 p.m. FNCCC Annual Meeting agenda (short and sweet)
- 5:30 p.m. Preston City Congregational Church sponsored barbeque dinner
- 6:15-6:30 p.m. Depart for home

The May 15th meeting agenda is simple. We need to vote on the 2022-2023 budget recommended by the Executive Committee and presented by Treasurer Doug Loux and hopefully approve a few proposals from the committee.

Dinner is a chicken barbeque with salads, drink, and a delicious dessert. If you are worried about the residual effects of COVID, we are planning to meet outside in the pavilion on the "Field of Dreams" with plenty of fresh air.

Please call the office and let Sandy know you plan to attend and I will let Rev. Gammon know. The donation of \$10 from each of you will help to defray the cost of the dinner.

If you prefer, you may email Rev. Gammon with your reservation for this grand celebration of congregational life by May 8th: ExecDir277@Gmail.com

Rev. Gammon is the Moderator of the Fellowship.

Submitted by *Sandy Dudek*

BINGO at Strawberry Park begins May 7th.



We are one of the non-profit organizations that assist at the games selling cards and receive funds which are used to offset our budget. Please sign-up if you are able to help; we need three workers to sell cards at each session. The sign-up to help is on the Bingo calendar posted on the mid-level bulletin board just outside the Sunday School hall. Lee Ann Fessenden and Lisa Fessenden are the co-chairmen this session.

Do you have a Personal Identification Number (PIN) necessary to help? The office has the information and forms available to get you started if you don't! You must be a church member to receive a PIN.

Thank you to those who sign up to assist and continue to make this a successful mission for our church.

MEMORIAL BRICK GARDEN

We are again offering the opportunity for you to purchase a brick to be placed in our



Memorial Garden in the lower parking lot beside the walkway. You can purchase a brick in honor of, in celebration of, or in memory of someone. A 4"x 8" brick costs \$75, and can have up to 3 lines of engraving and up to 18 characters per line. An 8"x 8" brick costs \$125, can have up to six lines of engraving and up to 18 characters per line. Order forms can be found by the upper-level elevator. Speak with Joy or Rich Chalifoux if you have any questions.

APRIL SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

We had a good turnout for our meeting last Sunday afternoon. Financial officers brought us up-to-date information. Attendees were eager to move forward on many projects as we navigate our way through our "new normal" life with COVID.

Continuing with the kitchen update, offering one service during the summer, reaching out to members we have not seen in a while, sharing information with prospective new members and much more was considered. Some great ideas were shared and will be discussed in the future. Stay tuned for updates and how you can possibly help!

LAST WORD

INTUITION

**When you don't know
how you know...
But you know you know...
and you know you knew...
And that's all you needed to know.**