

THE PRESTON PILGRIM

The newsletter of
The Preston City
Congregational Church
Gathered 1698

APRIL 2018

CHURCH ADDRESS
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WORSHIP
9:00 & 10:30 A.M.
(Sept. 10 - May 20)

SUNDAY SCHOOL
8:45 A.M.
(Sept. 10 - May 20)

EMAIL: PCCC@SNET.NET
WEBSITE: prestoncitycongregational.org
Visit us on **FACEBOOK**



News and information for next month's newsletter is **due by April 22nd**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.



Dear Members and Friends,

Lately, it seems that more-and-more people are asking me questions regarding my retirement. I answer their questions as best I can at the present time. I plan to retire in 2024, six years. I say, "I plan," but who knows what God has in store for my future, or our future. I know that I want to do whatever He has planned for me, so I remain "open" to his direction for my life.

Retiring from the church I have loved serving for 39 years (come retirement) will not be easy. Thinking about my retirement years before it actually happens is best for both of us; it won't come as a surprise on that day when I write my letter of intention to retire to church leaders and you, the congregation.

Because of my long pastorate with you, colleagues and congregational church leaders who work with churches seeking a new minister, for the most part, agree that starting now to prepare for that day is beneficial to the congregation and minister in many ways (see article below).

You will be hearing more about how the Pastoral Exploratory Committee plans to proceed with this "adventure" in the months and years ahead. The goal of the Committee and myself is to do everything we can to maintain the vibrant witness of the church, always with God's leading clearly in mind!

I'm looking forward to the years that remain. I trust that God still has much for us to do as we worship, work, and fellowship together.

Stay close to God!
Rev. Stan
Rev. Stan

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A WORD FROM THE PASTORAL EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

Scott Van Alst, Chair

The Pastoral Exploratory Committee (PEC) has been hard at work over these last several months. As a reminder, the PEC was put in place to explore best practices for hiring a "Settled Minister" when the time comes that Rev. Stan retires (2024). Even though it seems like a ways away, we believe that preparing and gaining knowledge *now* to assist the congregation with those decisions *should begin now*.

The Committee has met with the former Executive Secretary of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC or NA), The Rev. Thomas Richard. Rev. Richard defined for us the types of ministers that are available to assist a congregation through a transition like the one we will experience in six years. Rev. Richard also directed us to the NA website (naccc.org) to gain an understanding of the programs and guidance documents available to us as a congregation and a search committee.

The PEC will continue to work over the summer. One of the valuable tools promoted by the NA and Rev. Richard was to conduct a survey related to church life and ministry. We anticipate the first surveys to be available in September or October. This will be a great way for the congregation to share with us the most important aspects of church life and how you feel the church is doing in meeting your needs and the needs of the community.

Finally, the committee would like to expand by 2-3 members as we move into the next phase of our work. If you would like to be considered for participation on the committee, please see any one of the committee members. We are especially interested in adding some individuals (church members) that have young families.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask one of us as we wish to keep you informed of how we are proceeding in this very important process.

THE PEC COMMITTEE

Scott Van Alst, Chair, Robert Onderdonk, Shari Purcell, Pat Marino, Sharon Breen, Sandy Dudek, and Barbara Perry

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DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH

WE WELCOMED the following people into the membership of the church: Robin Ann Backofen, Michael Heinzelman, Phyllis Knutson and Paul Penley. Welcome these fine people into our church family.

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NEW PHOTO DIRECTORY

Have you signed up to be in our new church directory? Everyone is welcome to take part, you don't have to be a church member to be included. If you attend the church during the year, consider being part of the project. It will help all of us to put names to faces we see on Sunday mornings. Our directory won't be complete without you. Sign up today at:

booknow-lifetouch.appointment-plus.com/y6ngbnsx

Debi Berube, Lee Ann Fessenden, and Lisa Fessenden are coordinating this wonderful event. Go online and book your sitting or speak to one of these coordinators. Everyone/every family will receive a free 8"x10" color photograph plus a church directory containing

other church families and individuals in the congregation. The dates for picture-taking are: May 11 & 12 and May 15 & 16. Let's have a record turnout for this publication. Sign up today!

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BIBLE STUDY

The Tuesday night Bible Study will be starting a new session on April 24th at 6:30 p.m. Please plan on joining us for an introductory study on the Bible. The class will explore the history of the Bible and provide a general understanding of each book of the Bible within the rich context of history, culture, and God's message for our lives. The Bible Study will continue through the summer and anyone is welcome to attend any and all sessions. If you have any questions, you can contact Scott Van Alst at 401.439.5520.

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MEATLOAF SUPPER

This very popular meal will be held on Saturday, April 28th, from 4 - 6 P.M. in Dudek Hall. Tickets are: \$11 Adults and \$6 for Children twelve and under. The menu includes: *homemade meatloaf, mashed potatoes & gravy, green bean casserole, harvard beets, rolls and dessert*. For tickets call the church office: 860.887.4647. Reservations are recommended, and tickets must be picked up by 5 P.M. on the day of the supper. Take-outs are also available. Get your tickets soon, only 100 will be sold!

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BINGO NEWS

A meeting of interested people planning to help with recreational Bingo at Strawberry Park (Preston) this summer was held on April 5th. They're set and ready to go starting May 5th. We thank them for helping out with this very popular event held at the campground. Would you like to get involved, or learn more? Contact the church office and we'll tell you how you can join the team. Anyone working with BINGO must be licensed with the town of Preston; we have the paperwork. Consider getting involved.

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CONGRATULATIONS

to Eagle Scout Robert Roark. A ceremony marking this achievement was held at the church on March 31st. An 8' x 10' storage shed was built behind the church by Rob and fellow scouts last summer. It was dedicated in memory of his sister, Olivia following the Eagle ceremony. We thank Rob for thinking about his church when considering his project. Stop by and see the shed. Notice the purple plaque, it was Olivia's favorite color! *Thanks, Rob*



NOTES FROM BEHIND THE HANDLE BARS

The 2018 motorcycle riding season is right around the corner. I wanted to share some quick facts regarding motorcycle accidents. When there are accidents involving cars and motorcycles, in 2/3 of the cases the accidents are caused by the other vehicle violating the motorcycle's right-of-way. Intersections are the most likely place for these types of accidents. Typically, the cause is a failure of the motorist to detect and recognize motorcycles in traffic. Please keep an eye out for the motorcycles, they will soon be everywhere.

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DOOR MONITORS

Volunteers are needed. Please lend a hand if you are able. All the details pertaining to door monitors are posted on the Information Center bulletin board. Contact Lowell Calkins if you have any questions (860.887.5939). We especially need volunteers for the 10:30 service. *Thanks!*

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FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

Join FPU coordinator, Bob Vescovi this Tuesday night (4/10) at 6:30 in Halls' Hall as he leads the first session of FPU. This first class is FREE. Then, if you'd like to attend the next 8 weeks, you can register online at DaveRamsey.com (or ask Bob!). Call him with any questions you may have about this wonderful program designed to help you manage your finances better.

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STILL LOOKING... Volunteers are needed to assist with the production of our web stream services on Sunday mornings. It's not as hard to do as you may think. Those presently overseeing the production would be glad to show you what's involved. Stop by the room by the TV in Halls' Hall and see what's involved. Jim & Sandra, along with Sue Brosnan and Patrick Magowan will be glad to answer any questions you have.

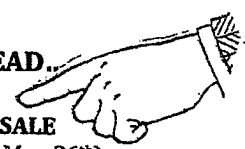
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REMINDER

Completed scholarship application forms are due in the office by April 30th. Scholarships will be awarded to church members seeking their first college/university degree or certificate.

We are grateful to those who made contributions to the scholarship fund in February. It's not too late to still give to this worthwhile fund. You can place your check or monetary gift in an envelope marked *Scholarship Fund* and place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or mail it to the church. Be sure to write *Scholarship Fund* in the memo section of your check. Also, let us know if your gift is in memory of/celebration of/or in honor of someone. A list of donors will appear in the worship folder on June 10th (no amounts included). Scholarships will be awarded to some very deserving young people, thanks to your generosity!

LOOKING AHEAD...



CHURCH YARD SALE

May 19th, (Rain date: May 26th)
8 - 2 P.M.

Good, clean re-sellable items are now being accepted. No clothing air conditioners, tires, or computers, please. Call Stella Dawley (860.887.6452) to make arrangements to drop your donations off. Please do not leave items outside the annex. Help will be needed on the day of the sale (6 A.M.) to set up and clean up (1:30 P.M.). Please sign the sheet on the Information center bulletin board if you can lend a hand on this day.

Something new this spring... From noontime on, **FILL A BROWN SHOPPING BAG FOR \$3**. All items must be in the bag (shopping bags needed).

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SUMMER SCHEDULE

We will begin our summer worship schedule on May 27th; 9 A.M. only. Two services will resume on September 9th. Summer services will include a message for the children. Plan to be present!

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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 and able to help out with this important outreach, please call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128. Thank you!

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THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION took place March 11th when six young people became members of the church: Cory Converse, Delaney Farinha, Nathan Heinzelman, Ryleigh Pappas, Kristen Rider, and Jack Zachem. It was a very special time in the life of the church!

CHILDREN'S DAY is May 20th at the 10:30 a.m. service. I hope you will mark your calendar and plan to attend.

PLANS are continuing for Vacation Bible School July 9th -13th. We hope your children and teens will be able to be present as we explore "*SHIPWRECKED...Rescued by Jesus*" put out by Group Publishing. Sandy Dudek and Shari Purcell will be directing the school and we will need many helpers. Please speak to one of us if you are interested in lending a hand. It really is meaningful to work with the kids.

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ENVELOPES similar to those the adults use for worship are available to the children. Please ask the D.R.E. 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.

The Preston Junior Pilgrim



Preston City Congregational Church Sunday School Newsletter

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION...



GOD IS AMAZING! I've been thinking of how intricately and wonderfully he made us when we can go to bed dead tired and wake up re-energized. Couldn't go another step the night before, but now ready to go! (Even after a night where rest has been not the best). **"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Psalm 139:14**

WHEN WE HAVE health challenges and wonder if God is *real* and there, remember to **"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."** **1 Peter 5:7** How do we know God is always there... oftentimes God sends others who listen, who help, who lighten our load. Look for them as you go through your day.

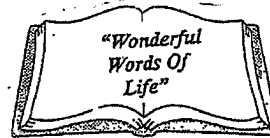
GOOD FRIDAY was an awesome day here at the church for the children who came. But the preparation for that day is huge, but 1 by 1 God sent me the helpers I needed to minister to the children that day. **GOD IS AMAZING!**

GOD helps us see a way when others say "there is no way." Let us remember to trust in God even when we don't understand. **"...with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26**

WHAT'S on your mind today. Take it to the Lord in prayer and remember God keeps His promises. **"And we know in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28**

My the **SON**shine through me,

Sandy Oudel



APRIL BIBLE VERSES

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

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 (Grades 3-12)**

PLEASE ENCOURAGE students to learn these verses; they will serve them well the rest of their lives. To qualify for an award at the end of the year, verses must be correctly recited by the end of each month to Mrs. Dudek or their teacher. **PLEASE NOTE:** Bible cutouts are posted on the bulletin board in the back of the Sunday School Hall. When the child has recited the monthly verse, they will place a sticker on the proper month. Let's hope many students get all nine of them this year... even if they miss one, there will be an opportunity to make up one missed verse.

YOUTH MISSION TRIP... One spot is available for the Rutland/Green Mountains, Vermont trip. If you are High School age (includes those who will complete 8th grade this year) and have been considering going, but feel unsure, we'd be glad to have you speak to someone who has gone before. Right now seven young people are going with Scott & Lisa Van Alst as their leaders. The trip is July 22-28th. Please speak to the Van Alsts or Cheryl Giuliano if you are interested in going. It may prove to be a life changing experience!

THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS recently interviewed **Tiffany Barry** for their faith journey bulletin board. Be sure to view it on the mid-level bulletin board located to the left of the doors to Dudek Hall.

THANK YOU to those who provided items or helped with the Youth Volunteers Appreciation Dinner. It was very much appreciated.

HAVE YOUR CHILDREN BEEN MISSING SUNDAY SCHOOL? Please know that we miss them so much and would love to have them here on Sunday mornings. The high school class remains a strong presence at Sunday School, a sign to me that besides the learning that takes place, much bonding has happened that is meaningful for teens. I know there are sports, sleeping in, and lots of other things, but please do not underestimate the importance of a faith life and being in fellowship with other Christians.

DANGEROUS WORDS... "I hear...", "They say...", "Everybody says", "Did you hear...?", "Isn't that awful...?", "People say...", "Somebody said...", "Don't say I told you..." **Words can hurt others!**

BELOW FIND information sent to us by The Northeast Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches to which our church belongs. This information is about "Camp Winniaugwamauk in Brooksville, Maine. The actual cost is \$50.00 for a young person in grades 5-12. In my office I have the Registration form which must be turned in to the church office by **May 27, 2018**. Also in the church office is an application to serve as Summer Camp Staff. If you have questions, call Mrs. Dudek at 860.887.46457.

The Northeast Fellowship of
Congregational Christian Churches presents:
"Camp Winniaugwamauk"

July 22-28, 2018



The Congregational Christian Council of Maine offers a one week residential camping experience for youth and teens in grades 5-12. In Brooksville, Maine (just outside of Blue Hill).



Camp Winniaugwamauk cost per camper is \$235.00 this year.

The FNCCC is subsidizing camp again this year. The camper cost is only **\$50.00** this is payable to the FNCCC, due at the office by May 14, 2018 (Staff apps. May 1st)

Please fill out your applications have Pastor sign them and mail them including the \$50.00 to: **FNCCC/Camp**

277 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06106

NEW this year we are providing transportation: Please contact Pastor Irv @ Exec@nefellowship.org or 413-320-6955 or Brenda @ 413-584-1325 for more info.

Your Camp Directors for 2018 are Pastor Mark Tanner from the Federated Church in Skowhegan, and Gregg Hanscom from East Orrington Congregational Church. Assisted by Pastor Irv Gammon of Florence Cong'l Church of Florence, MA

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 John 4: 7 & 8

MARCH 2018
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 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
 26 27 28 29 30 31

MAY 2018
 S M T W T F S S
 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
 27 28 29 30 31



APRIL 2018

BRING THE FAMILY!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

SUNDAYS:

Morning worship, 9, 10:30 a.m.

9:00 a.m. service is web streamed.

Sunday School 8:45 a.m.

Coffee hour, 9:50 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

Kidz Praise: 10-10:25 a.m.

Senior Pilgrim Fellowship

Check church worship folder

The newsletter is posted on our website:

prestoncitycongregational.org

DID YOU KNOW that our Faith Community Nurse, Sandra Wright is available on the First Sunday of each month, between services in Room 18. You can drop in for a quick blood pressure check or bring your "health & wellness" questions along, too.

Her email address is:

SandraLMWright@gmail.com

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. 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).

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 EASTER! Sunrise service 6:30a Amos Lake (if rain, Preston City Congre. Church) Easter breakfast 7a NO Sunday School	2 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	3 Handbells 6p Pastoral Exploratory Committee 6:30p Scarecrow Festival Comm. mtg. 6:30p	4 Wedding rehearsal 4p Finance Committee Meeting 7p AA 7:30p	5 Wedding 2p Adult choir 7p	6	7 Men's Group 8-9:30a Youth Volunteers Appreciation Dinner 6p
8 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Semi-annual meeting Noon	9 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	10 Staff meeting 9a Handbells 6p Board of Religious Education 6p Financial Peace Uni- versity 6:30p	11 St. Jude worship 11a AA 7:30p	12 Adult choir 7p	13	14 Spring clean-up 8a
15 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Eagle Scout bake sale fundraiser—Peter Crary following wor- ship	16 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	17 Financial Peace Uni- versity 6:30-8:30p	18 NO Trustees meeting NO Standing Comm. meeting AA 7:30p	19 Adult choir 7p	20	21
22 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45p Halls' Hall in use 1-5p	23 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	24 Handbells 6p Financial Peace Uni- versity 6:30-8:30p Bible study 6:30p	25 Creamery Brook 3p AA 7:30p	26 Adult choir 7p	27	28 Mealof Supper 4-6p
29 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Food distribution Sun. (following the service)	30 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p		Please check with Rev. Stan or Sandy before using our names as references. This courte- sy would be very much appreciated.	To place flowers in church during April, sign the Flower Chart, fill out the res- ervation form and call Doreen Mainville (860.639.4500)	LOST OR FOUND Something at church? There is a basket in the Information Cen- ter.	PLEASE NOTE: Active church mem- bers who wish to bor- row church property (tables, chairs), call the church office.

He hath made everything beautiful in his time...~Ecclesiastes 3:11