

THE PRESTON PILGRIM

The newsletter of
**The Preston City
Congregational Church**
Gathered 1698

**DECEMBER
2016**

CHURCH ADDRESS
321 Route 164
Preston, CT 06365-8108
TELEPHONE
(860) 887-4647, (860) 886-7200

FAX
(860) 887-4647

WORSHIP
9:00 & 10:30 A.M.
(Sept. 11 – May 21)

SUNDAY SCHOOL
8:45 A.M.

EMAIL: PCCC@SNET.NET

WEBSITE: prestoncitycongregational.org
Visit us on **FACEBOOK**



News and information for the February newsletter is due in the church office by **January 22nd**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.



LITTLE GIFT

This is one of my favorite Christmas stories, told by one of my favorite authors, Dr. Charles Swindoll:

"A lady had a circle of friends for whom she really wanted to buy Christmas presents. Time slipped away and it was so busy at work for her she just wasn't able to get to the store to purchase those gifts. Time was running out. So not too many days before Christmas she decided to give up on the gift idea and just buy everybody the same beautiful Christmas card. She went to the local gift store and hurriedly went through the now picked over stack of cards and found a box of fifty, just exactly what she wanted. She didn't take time to read the message, she just noticed a beautiful cover on it and there was gold around it and a floral appearance on the front of the card and she thought, that's perfect. So she signed all of them, "With all my love."



As New Year's Day came and she had time to go back to two or three cards she didn't send from that stack, she was shocked to read the message inside. It said, in a little rhyme, "This Christmas card is just to say, a little gift is on its way."

As Christmas day gets closer and closer, remember to slow down and take in the beauty associated with this very special day.

Remember... *a little gift IS on His way*, and He is coming for all people. There is no finer gift, for this little gift is Jesus, and He is eternal! And that's BIG!

I wish you and yours a very meaning-filled Christmas, and a New Year with many blessings!



See you in church!
Rev. Stan
Rev. Stan

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REMEMBER...

Christmas Eve services: 4 & 11 P.M.

On **Christmas morning** there will be one service of worship starting at 10:30 A.M. We hope to see you and your family for a very special service, celebrating a very special Child.

On **New Year's Day morning**, there will be one service of worship starting at 10:30 A.M. This will be a "Family Service" as the Sunday School will not be in session. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered.

THE ASSOCIATE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

In Charles Dicken's story "A Christmas Carol", Scrooge goes from a miser and a selfish old man to a giving and caring man in only a short time. It is a miracle of sorts. The only problem is that instead of giving God the credit, the narrator gives the credit to the ghosts or spirits. The only mention of the Divine is through indirect references, and when Tiny Tim says, "God bless us everyone."

But that is the world we live in. God is not praised by most, and whatever happens that would appear miraculous is credited to man's doing. If man has thoughts of salvation, then it is through good works.

Yet good deeds are only shadows of the hope and joy that comes through Christ. They are good but they do not save, as we know. At this time of year, what a great opportunity we have to express to our friends and neighbors the love of God. The joy of this time is a response to the grace and love of God. Perhaps as we show grace and love, someone who may not know of them will find them in Christ.

May the joy of the Lord be our strength,

Rev. Tom

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DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER...

WE WELCOMED into the Household of Christian Faith through the Sacrament of Baptism:

November 20, *Kevin Kinirons Whitacre*, son of
Nancy & John Whitacre of
Exeter, RI.

We ask God's blessing upon this little one.



WE WELCOMED the following people into the membership of the church on Thanksgiving Sunday: Daniel & Lisa Bettencourt, Amanda Flynn, Thomas & Carole Flynn, Clifford Jackson, Joshua & Kimberly Koniecko, Debra McCuen Marasco, Lisa Foss, Jonathan & Amy Rowe, and Susan Wybraniec. Welcome these wonderful people to the church.



WEB STREAMING NEWS

If you're interested in learning how to operate the web streaming equipment, contact Jim Wright (860.535.2709). He'll tell you what you need to know, show you what you need to do, and give you the opportunity to experience the various jobs in a hands-on manner. Several people have already come forward to see what's involved in producing our Sunday morning (9 A.M.) service. We're still looking for a few more volunteers. We thank the web streaming volunteers who have been involved in this important outreach ministry since July. Consider getting involved.

Our 11 P.M. Christmas Eve service will be streamed this year. If you can't make it to church, tune in. Simply go to the church website and press on the web stream icon; it's that easy!

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ADVENT GIVING

Here's something to consider doing throughout the Advent season this year (November 27 – December 18, -- 22 days/22 cans). As a family or individual, wrap a box with Christmas paper and place one canned good in the box for each day of Advent. Then, on December 18th, bring your box of canned goods to the church and put them around the Christmas tree in the Fessenden Foyer. Be sure to put a note in your box saying who the food is from. All food collected will go to the "Two-Can Food Pantry" here at the church. What a great way to help someone in need this special time of year. We thank Bunny Perry for this idea!

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BUDGET NEWS

We so appreciate the many people and families who have already offered their pledge of support to the 2017 church budget. We count on our members and friends to keep the church financially secure from year-to-year. If you have not yet submitted your pledge, please try to do so before the end of December. Stewardship letters explaining the pledging process, as well as pledge forms can be found on the Information center table. Contact the church office if you have any questions. Your support is needed and appreciated!

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YOUR 2016 PLEDGE

Is it up-to-date? With only TWO Sundays until year's end, we're hoping that all pledges made in January of this year will be paid-in-full by the end of December. If you have any questions about the status of your pledge, call the Financial Secretary, Sue Creamer at (860.376.2731). We're hoping to end 2016 "in the black" again this year. With your help, we will! *Please note that all giving/donations/contributions must be received before year's end to be given credit for 2016.*

THANK YOU, TROOP 75

Preston's Boy Scout Troop #75 collected 2,452 cans of food, during their annual people at Thanksgiving time. Again this year, the cans collected were given to the "Toucan Food Pantry" located here at the church. The arrival of these canned goods comes at a time when they are needed most - the holidays, when many people/families are in need of some extra help. We thank the Scouts and their Leaders for what they have done again this year!

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DID YOU KNOW?

That thanks to your generosity, and that of many others, the food pantry, in addition to the usual monthly food bags, was able to give out 91 turkeys at Thanksgiving time? We're so happy that so many people have been supporting this community-wide ministry. The Pantry just received word that the Jewett City Savings Bank awarded them a grant totaling \$2,000 for helping those in need throughout the year. We thank Stella Dawley, Harriet Rosiene, Betsy & Dwight Hopkins and the volunteers who give their time to this important outreach program. *Well done!*

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BIBLE STUDY

Save your Monday mornings for an interesting, informative, and educational gathering with fellow worshippers! We meet in Halls' Hall from 10 -11 A.M. We're currently reading the letter of James. This Little book (5 chapters) offers important insights that the Church needs to keep in mind even today! We'll take a break following the class on December 19, and return on January 23. Plan to attend whatever week fits your schedule. As always, the coffee pot will be on! Rev. Stan leads the study.

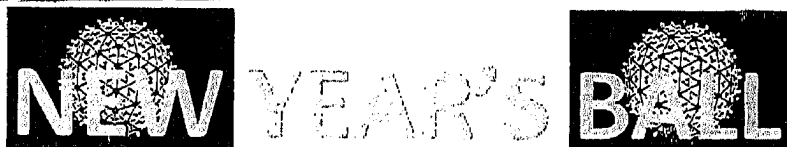
READ ABOUT the amazing accomplishments of one our own, **Rachel Orlomoski**, on the Brag section of the Information Center Bulletin Board.

JANUARY BIBLE VERSES

Jesus said, "...Do to others what you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12)
Grades Toddler 3- Grade 2) **Golden Rule**

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven." Luke 6:37 (Grades 3-12)

**ATTENTION...CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE STUDENTS,
THOSE IN THEIR 20'S IN SCHOOL OR NOT...HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE:**



When: Saturday, January 7th from 7 - 10 pm
Location: Preston City Congregational Church
What: Bring IT! Worship Service
More: Snacks, Games, Music, Fun, & a Movie
R.S.V.P: 860-710-1262 (Mrs.V's)

DOOR MONITORS

Volunteers are needed for December and January, especially during the 10:30 service. Please lend a hand if you 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). *Thanks!*

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WOW!!

At last count, just over 160 coats were collected and distributed to various organizations in southeastern Connecticut. Laurie Bowers is still accepting donations, and believes she will easily reach 200 coats within the coming weeks. You can place your no longer needed coats in the Allyn box located beside the Information Center table. Thank you for being so generous!

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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 in helping out with this important outreach, please call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128. *Thank you!*

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REMINDER

Officers, board and committee members are reminded that their report for inclusion in the annual report is due in the office by January 15, 2017. Your report does NOT have to be typed. If you're unsure about whether or not you need to submit one, please call the office. The date of the Annual Meeting is Tuesday, February 14, beginning 7 P.M. Refreshments and coffee will be available at 6:30 P.M. in Halls' Hall.

The Preston Junior Pilgrim



Preston City Congregational Church Sunday School Newsletter

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:



SNOW...this very word strikes familiar chords in each of us. I was thinking about this last week when we had our first light dusting of snow. For children (and many schoolteachers!), they are hoping for a day off from school and when it cancels the night before, it is like a bonus when you can go to sleep and not have to get up early to catch the cancellations in the morning! To our elderly, it often means being stuck inside until it is safe to get out and to those in business it means challenges to get to all their customers, but needed income as well.

AS FALL gives way to the cold, dark days of winter, I've often thought of the dark and gloomy days turning into light and beauty when the snow falls. When the earth around us is all blanketed with snow, it reminds us that all that is dark and not desirable is covered over with white beauty. Isaiah 1:18 tells us: "Come now and let us reason together says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." What a wonderful thought and picture of God's forgiveness. Though our sins be like scarlet and crimson, God says, "I will get rid of all that. I will take it away and I will wash you white as snow." What a promise!

SOON Christmas will be upon us, when our wonderful Savior will be born in our hearts once again. And then a brand new year knowing we can start off with a clean slate with God. There is much to look forward to in 2017. So, whatever **SNOW** means to you, I hope you will remember the deep beauty of it God has given to each one of us!

IT'S MY PRIVILEGE to work with your children and each of you as we do our best to spread the "good news" on earth especially to those who are hurting for whatever reason. Let us continue to be good ambassadors. I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a New Year filled with good health and the peace that only God can give you.

May the **SON**shine through me;

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." C. S. Lewis

Sandy Dudek

DECEMBER BIBLE VERSES

Jesus said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want."
(Psalm 23:1) Grades Toddler 3- Grade 2)

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, according to his purpose." Romans 8:28 (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 Dudek 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.

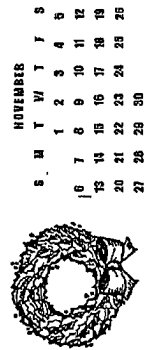


CHRISTMAS PAGEANTS... "The Reason for the Season" and "The Nativity" directed by Tammy Sabados and Maggie Tourangeau and performed by the children of our Sunday School will be presented, **Sunday, December 11th at 4:00 p.m.** I hope you will plan to come and let the children warm your heart this Christmas. We will be having pizza, beverages, chips, and cookies following the pageants. There will be plenty for all.

SIX THANKSGIVING BASKETS went out this Thanksgiving from the Sunday School with the aid of Preston Veterans Memorial School. **THANK YOU** to those who brought turkeys or gave donations to purchase pies.

SECRET SANTA... May God bless each one of you who provided a gift or two for the Secret Santa program! Days were brightened because of your caring.

Oops... This is really a December/January newsletter!



NOVEMBER
 S M T W T F S
 1 2 3 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

DECEMBER 2016

JANUARY 2017
 S M T W T F S
 1 2 3 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

<p>To place flowers in church during December, sign the Flower chart in the narthex, and call Joyce Brewster at</p>	<p>Please note: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (tables, chairs) call the church office.</p>	<p>Please check with Rev. Stan or Sandy before using our names as references. This courtesy would be appreciated.</p>	<p>LOST OR FOUND There is a basket in the Information Center</p>	<p>1 Adult choir 7p</p>	<p>2 Children's Cookie Bake 3-6p</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4 Communion worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a SS communion 9:05a Adult choir sings 9a Christmas caroling 2p</p>	<p>5 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p</p>	<p>6 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 Handbell rehearsal 6p Financial Peace University 6:30p</p>	<p>7 AA 7:30p</p>	<p>8 Adult choir 7p</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Sunday School pageants 4p</p>	<p>12 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p</p>	<p>13 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30 Senior Lunch Noon Board of Rel. Ed. 6p Handbell rehearsal 6p</p>	<p>14 St. Jude worship 11a Trustees' meeting 6p Standing Committee Meeting 7p AA 7:30p</p>	<p>15 Adult choir 7p</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a Adult choir sings 9a Food distribution Sunday Bake Sale - R. Roark Hall's Hall in use 1:30-5p</p>	<p>19 Bible study 10a Confirmation mid-year exam 6:30p Yoga 6:30p</p>	<p>20 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a No handbell rehearsal</p>	<p>21 AA 7:30p</p>	<p>22 Adult choir 7p</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Worship 4, 11p</p>
<p>25 MERRY CHRISTMAS One service of Worship 10:30a NO Sunday School</p>	<p>26 NO Confirmation Yoga 6:30p</p>	<p>27 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30</p>	<p>28 Creamery Brook 3p AA 7:30p</p>	<p>29 Adult choir 7p</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve Drive safely!</p>



Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

SUNDAYS:

Morning worship, 9, 10:30 a.m.
 Sunday School 8:45 a.m.
 Coffee hour, 9:50 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
 Children's Choir: 10-10:25 a.m.
 Youth Choir: 10-10:25 a.m.
 Senior Pilgrim Fellowship
 Check church bulletin
 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

CHECK IT OUT

Did you know we have a church library, filled with lots of interesting books? It's located at the back of Dudek Hall.

Did you know we have a "Prayer Path" located on the Field of Dreams? Feel free to sit and meditate on the words posted near each bench.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

CANCELLATIONS: Tune in to Television Channel 3 or you may check Facebook or our website: prestoncitycongregational.org, or call the office. A message will be announced on the answering machine. When Sunday School is cancelled, church is **NOT CANCELLED** unless specifically announced.

DECEMBER 2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	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



JANUARY 2017

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

SUNDAYS:

- Morning worship, 9, 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday School 8:45 a.m.
- Coffee hour, 9:50 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
- Children's Choir: 10-10:25 a.m.
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- Senior Pilgrim Fellowship
- Check church bulletin

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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 Happy New Year! Health & Happiness ONE service of worship 10:30 a.m. NO Sunday School	2 Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	3 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a NO handbell rehearsal	4 AA 7:30p	5 Adult choir 7p	6	7 Bring II 7-10p
8 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a	9 Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	10 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a Senior Lunch Noon Board of Rel. Ed. 6p NO handbell rehearsal	11 St. Jude worship 11a Finance Committee meeting 7p AA 7:30p	12 Adult choir 7p	13	14
15 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a	16 Martin Luther King Day Office closed NO Confirmation Yoga 6:30p	17 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a NO handbell rehearsal	18 Trustees' meeting 6:00p Standing Comm. meeting 7:00p AA 7:30p	19 Adult choir 7p	20	21
22 Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45p	23 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	24 Friends & Family Café 9-11:30a Handbell rehearsal 6p	25 Creamery Brook 3p AA 7:30p	26 Adult choir 7p	27	28
29 Worship 9a Food distribution Sun. (following the service)	30 Bible study 10a Confirmation 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	31 Handbell rehearsal 6p	Looking ahead... February 4th Chili/Soup Supper	To place flowers in church during January, sign the Flower Chart in the narthex and call Joyce Brewster at 860.376.4167	LOST OR FOUND: Something at church? There is a basket in the Information Center.	PLEASE NOTE: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (tables, chairs), call the church office.