

# THE PRESTON PILGRIM

The newsletter of  
The Preston City  
Congregational Church  
Gathered 1698

**MARCH 2015**

**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.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
8:45 a.m.

**EMAIL:** [PCCC@SNET.NET](mailto:PCCC@SNET.NET)  
**WEBSITE:** [prestoncitycongregational.org](http://prestoncitycongregational.org)  
Visit us on **FACEBOOK**

News and information for the April newsletter is due in the church office by **March 15**. You may leave information in the holder located on the wall in the kitchen.

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**Blah! Blah! Blah!**

*Just remember... in the winter...  
Far beneath the BITTER SNOW,  
Lies the seed that with the sun's love  
In the spring becomes the rose."*  
(The Rose)

Bitter snow? I don't tend to think of snow as bitter. I like snow, just not *this* much. I enjoy being home, sitting in my sunroom, watching the snow fly as the wind blows.

These words, made popular by singer Bette Midler came to mind today as I was driving around town; especially the words "bitter snow." Although I have never referred to the white stuff as bitter snow, I've met people this winter who would. They've had it with winter, the snow, and the freezing temperatures. I've heard people say, "Too much!" "I give up!" "Enough already!"

**"STOP!"**

Maybe you've seen the photo on the internet of a snowman with just his head sticking out of a huge mound of snow in someone's front yard? Beside the head, is a white flag on a stick with the words, "I surrender." The snowman speaks for many of us; we're getting tired of winter, we're feeling blah. It's time for spring; warmer

weather, green grass, flowering trees and salt-free cars!

Spring officially arrives on March 20! I can't help but believe that much of the snow we see today will still be with us. But spring *will come*, and when it does, how grateful we will be. "We made it!" "We survived!"

A beloved song of the church also came to mind recently...

*In the cold and snow of winter  
There's a spring that waits to be,  
Unrevealed until its season,  
Something God alone can see.*  
(Hymn of Promise)

God sees spring and summer, fall, and winter! We cannot. He is the God of all seasons as well as the seasons of our lives. And believing this will help me to persevere, endure, and appreciate the beauty of springtime even more!

Got the winter blahs? Remember His promise... spring IS coming! When it arrives, give Him thanks!



See you in church!  
*Rev. Stan*  
Rev. Stan

## DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

**WE WELCOMED** into the Household of Christian Faith through the Sacrament of Baptism: *McKinley Joyce Matteson*. She is the daughter of Jennifer and Shawn Matteson of Jewett City. McKinley was baptized on February 22. We ask God's blessing upon this little one.

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**WE CONGRATULATED** *Rebecca Lowe* and *Martin Shea* who were united in marriage on February 7. We wish them the very best for years to come!

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**WE EXPRESSED OUR SYMPATHY** to the family of *Conrad Nelson* who passed away on January 9. Conrad was a well-known and well-liked farmer in CT. Our thoughts and prayers go to his family.

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### CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

The Preston City Congregational Church Scholarship Fund was established in 1992, following the passing of church member, Helen Benjamin. Over these last 23 years, many scholarships have been presented to deserving young people in our congregation **thanks to your generosity!**

During the month of February, the congregation heard from Matthew Exley and Meghan Breen, past scholarship recipients, and what they've been doing since graduation... **IMPRESSIVE!** You heard how your giving to the scholarship fund helped them, and they encouraged you to give to this year's young people applying for college.

It's not too late; you can still give your donation in memory of someone, or in honor of someone. A listing of all donors (no amounts) will be listed in the worship folder on Scholarship Sunday (June 14). Place your contribution in an envelope marked "Scholarship Fund" and place it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church.

We have great young people in our midst. They bring life and joy to the church. Let's show them how much we care for them and their future endeavors!

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### HELP

Volunteers are needed to serve as door monitors on Sunday mornings during both services of worship (*and especially at the second service*). The duties of the monitor are posted on the hallway bulletin board (mid-level). Your help is needed and appreciated. Please contact coordinator Lowell Calkins (860.887.5939) if you have any questions.

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### ADULT STUDY GROUP

Join us Monday mornings, from 10 to 11 A.M. in Halls' Hall (coffee hour room). We're reading and discussing Max Lucado's best-selling book, "*Fearless*." You can pick up a copy in local bookstores, or from Amazon.com, or, you can

just attend the class and enjoy the discussion that follows each 10 minute video. It's a different topic each week. As always... the coffee pot will be on!

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### FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

After a snowed-out first class, 13 of 16 adults attended the first class held on February 24<sup>th</sup>. This Tuesday, March 3, is the last day people can sign up to attend the 9-week course taught by Dave Ramsey via DVD. We still have 2 membership kits in the church office that are available for purchase (\$93). Only 1 kit is needed per married or engaged couple. Of course, single people are encouraged to attend as well. Want to know more about FPU? Go to [Daveramsey.com](http://Daveramsey.com) and check it out, or speak with the Minister. It's a life-changing program!

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### FRIENDS & FAMILY CAFÉ

**Tuesdays, 9-11:30 A.M.**

**In the coffee hour room**

Enjoy a cup of coffee, some sweets,  
and some great people, too!

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The last **SENIOR LUNCH** scheduled until the fall will be Tuesday, March 10, starting at noon. The cost is "Free," however, you must sign up. A sheet is posted on the hallway bulletin board. The lunch is limited to 60 people. If you find you are unable to attend after signing up, please call the office; there's usually a waiting list. *Thanks!*

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**THE ANNUAL MEETING** of the church, held on February 10, was very well attended. It was an uplifting evening with several notable accomplishments:

- ✓ Our budgeted goal of \$230,062.00 was surpassed! In fact, only \$222,003.16 of the 2014 budget was spent, leaving \$8,058.84 as a balance at the end of the year! Even better, you contributed \$10,026.67 *more than we ever imagined, hoped for, prayed for!* What an amazing church family we have, and let's not forget the One, from whom all our blessings flow! His hand IS upon this place. Thank you for your support.
- ✓ More volunteers are needed to help Bingo coordinator, Mary Lou Jensen at Strawberry Park Campground here in Preston. Many of the sessions are on Saturday afternoons for about 2 hours. The campground cannot make a profit on the Bingo sessions they offer campers. Any profits must go to a non-profit organization like ours. In 2014, we received nearly \$9,000. Please speak with Mary Lou or call the office if you wish to know more. And thank you, Mary Lou, and your workers for your dedication to this endeavor.

- ✓ Those present at the meeting re-approved funding (\$2,000) for speakers/concerts/programs to be held on the church grounds or in the Sanctuary. Got an idea for a possible program, concert, or speaker? Let us know in the office.

These are just a few of the meeting highlights. Pick up a copy of the report if you haven't done so already. Call the office if you'd like us to mail you one. Well done, church!

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### DON'T FORGET ...

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME STARTS** March 8. Don't forget to "spring forward" 1 hour on Saturday night. You don't want to miss out!

**A MEATLOAF SUPPER** is planned Saturday, March 14. Tickets are on sale now for \$10 (Adults) and \$5 for children 12 and under. Only 150 tickets will be sold. Purchase yours on Sunday morning, or reserve them by calling the office.

**CONFIRMATION SUNDAY** is March 15, during the 10:30 service. Plan to be present as we welcome 8 young people into the membership of the church through the Rite of Confirmation.

**A POT LUCK SUPPER & HYMN SING** is planned for March 15. The meal will be from 5-6 P.M. and the hymn sing from 6-7 in the Sanctuary. Start looking for those favorite hymns of the church. A sign-up sheet is posted on the hallway bulletin board. Be sure to sign up and indicate what you plan to bring.

**NEW MEMBERS...** We're happy to say that new members will be welcomed into the church on **Palm Sunday, March 29**. Would you like to join the church? We'd love to have you as a member. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the Information Center bulletin board. The deadline to sign-up is March 15.

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**EASTER IS** April 5, and it's also a communion Sunday! In addition to the two regularly scheduled services, there will be an ecumenical sunrise service at Amos Lake in Preston starting at 6:30 A.M. In case of rain (or snow!), the service will be held in our Sanctuary.

**EASTER BREAKFAST...** We are looking for someone to coordinate this year's breakfast. If you would like more information about the breakfast and what it entails, please call the office. A volunteer (team) is needed **SOON!**

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### HATS OFF!

The "Soup & Chili Supper" held in January, raised \$718.53. We thank those who coordinated this event, and those who made soups and chilies. The money raised will go toward the 2015 church budget. We appreciate what you did.

### LOOKING AHEAD...

**THE SEMI ANNUAL MEETING** of the church is scheduled for Sunday, April 12, starting at noon. This is an all-church meeting and everyone is welcome to attend. However, only church members may vote on issues that come up. Come and hear what's happening in your church!

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### THE CHURCH MEMORIAL FUND

For many years, the church has had a memorial fund - a monetary fund established in memory of a loved one upon their death. The primary purpose of the memorial fund is to keep the church financially healthy, and to aid her in her many endeavors.

According to our current bylaws, upon the death of a loved one, the family may establish a memorial fund account for one year. After one year, if the family has not approached the church expressing a desire to use their loved one's memorial fund for a specific purpose (approved by the Diaconate), the account will be placed in the church's general memorial fund.

What better way to remember and honor the passing of a loved one than having contributions offered to the church following their death? So much good has been accomplished through the years because of the memorial fund.

If you have any questions about the memorial fund, please contact the church office.

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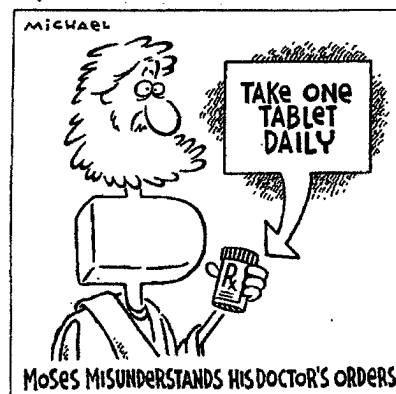
### YOUR COOPERATION IS NEEDED

Please remember if you are planning to use one of the church halls for an event on Sunday that **both halls and the kitchen are in use until 1 P.M.** Please **DO NOT** arrive early planning to set up for your event while church-related events are still in progress. Your understanding is appreciated.

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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. Many people have generously volunteered to take on this act of compassion in years past, and now we are in need of more volunteers when the need arises. If you would be willing to be a part of this important ministry, please call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128.



# The Preston Junior Pilgrim



Preston City Congregational Church Sunday School Newsletter

MAY THE  
GRACE  
OF THE  
LORD  
BE UPON  
YOU

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

**DISAPPOINTMENTS...** who hasn't had some! I spend time thinking about the young people here in the Sunday School and all young people and some of the decisions they've made when life hasn't unfolded as they thought it would. Disappointments... when they haven't been picked for the team they hoped they would make, the girlfriend or boyfriend has "dumped them", a friend betrays them, they lose a good friend to an accident; the list could go on and on. How do we get them to embrace the idea that disappointments are often God's appointments. How

do they, or us, for that fact come to deal positively when something in life throws us a curve. Do we come into an acceptance or do we let it debilitate us by turning to destructive forces. Do we really believe the Bible: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Do we really believe the Bible: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Do we really trust God? Or are these scripture verses something that does not walk out the door with us when we leave the church building.

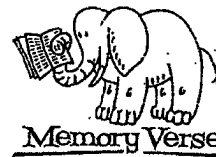
**WHEN** disappointment comes, it's a time to hold tightly onto your faith. It is a time to put confidence in God and yourself to get on the road to better things. It is a time to remember from Hebrews 13:5 "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Oftentimes, we feel so all alone when disappointment comes. It's important to remember, we are never alone...not only remember it, but believe it right to the core of our being.

**THOSE** of us with some age know that disappointments are temporary and have lived to see many times that God had something much better planned than we could ever have imagined. I love Garth Brook's song, "Thank you God for Unanswered Prayers. God sees into the future what we cannot see, only trust.

I will continue to use my influence with the young people God has given me to shepherd to impress upon them how important it is to trust God when things don't go as we planned. God has our best interest at heart and will always be there to pick up the pieces when life falls apart. And just maybe, you will be present to someone at God's bidding to see them through a crisis. Let's always be ready to bear witness for God! Our own lives will be blessed whenever we are able to help alleviate someone else's pain.

May the SONshine through me,

## MARCH BIBLE VERSES



Memory Verse

"Children, obey your parents..." (Ephesians 6:1) (N3-Grade 2)

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control..." Galatians 5:22-23 (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:** students who have recited the Bible verses will be posted on the Sunday School bulletin board in the SS Hall.

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**A LASAGNA DINNER** will take place March 7th. On the menu is lasagna, salad, bread, beverage and dessert. Adult tickets are \$10.00 and children 12 and under are \$5.00. We hope you can come to this fundraiser hosted by the Senior Pilgrim Fellowship. (This dinner was rescheduled from February 14<sup>th</sup>).

**THE FEBRUARY** storytelling has been postponed until March 8<sup>th</sup>. I hope your children will be here as Linda Kent-Farinha interacts with the children on the Transfiguration and Naomi Bushnell works with them on an enrichment activity. On March 15th, Judy Ladegard will be the storyteller and Shari Purcell will do enrichment. I hope your children will plan to be here.

**YOUTH MISSION TRIP PARTICIPANTS...** Please be sure that your mission trip payments are up-to-date. If you are unsure, contact the Giulianos (860.376.8901). Also a reminder that in order to go on the trip, you need to be present in Sunday School at least two Sundays per month. February 2015 is an exception as we have had to cancel Sunday School three Sundays of the four!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL dates are July 13-17<sup>th</sup>. We plan to do Group's "Hometown Nazareth... Where Jesus was a Kid." We plan to have a tent on the "Field of Dreams" that will be our Marketplace. This will be new and exciting for the kids and all of us! Judy Ladegard and Sandy Dudek are directing the school and we will need plenty of adult and teen volunteers to help us. Speak to Judy or Sandy to volunteer.

THE SENIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP are preparing for their Lasagna Dinner on March 7<sup>th</sup> and also plan to create a painting in March. They welcome new kids grades 9-12 anytime. For more information call the Giulianos (860.376.8901).

THE JUNIOR PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP went sledding at the McCaslins in February 1<sup>st</sup> and had a great time! They also did Valentine Crafts and then reached out to others with them. A trip on February 28<sup>th</sup> was planned for the Launch Trampoline Park in Warwick, RI the end of February. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are welcome to join the JPF. For more information call Leader Linda Kent-Farinha (860.608.6641) or Andy McCaslin (860.917.6572).

THE BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION welcomes Rick Alletto and Lisa Van Alst to the Board. The Board is an invaluable group that serves as an advisory committee to the Director of Religious Education. We warmly welcome these two fine individuals to our labors!

CONGRATULATIONS TO LAUREN HODKINSON (a 2014 church scholarship winner) was named to the Dean's List at Ithaca College in New York for the Fall 2014 semester. Lauren is a biochemistry major in the School of Humanities and Sciences. We are so proud of you, Lauren!!

CONGRATULATIONS TO KENDALL KOBELSKI who completed her degree at the University of Rhode Island in December...just 3 1/2 years! That's remarkable, Kendall! She majored in Communications and minored in Business. She now has her resumes out. We applaud your success, Kendall and share your joy!



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**16th ANNUAL SPECIAL HOLY WEEK EVENT**

When: Good Friday, April 3, 2015 11:45 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Where: Preston City Congregational Church

Age Group: Kindergarten through Seventh Grade

Cost: \$5.00, Check can be made out to Preston City Congregational Church and given to Sandy Dudek. This is the first year we have a fee to set off some of the expenses involved. In case of hardship, this fee will be waived. Please speak to Mrs. Dudek.

Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the Good Friday service at noon, if possible. If not, please drop your child off to attend the service with the Director of Religious Education, Sandy Dudek. High School young people and other adults will be assisting me. If your children have not been to a Good Friday service before, this should be a very meaningful service to them and also help them to formulate what happened to Jesus on this day and find out why such a day could possibly be considered "good".

Following the service, we will go downstairs for lunch, which will consist of sandwiches, chips, drink and dessert.

The children will then participate in a variety of activities, some of which will be making things to reinforce the meaning of Lent and Easter for the Christian. Hopefully, this will deepen their understanding of our Christian faith that Christ died for us...our salvation!

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions (860.887.4647)

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES.**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate below if a child is allergic to anything (food)

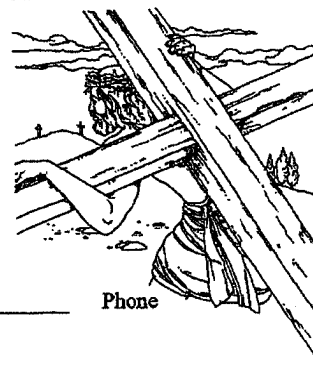
Parent or Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

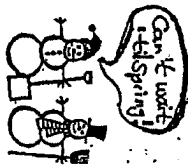
If you would like to provide a food or drink item, please check here and I will call you. \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. in case of emergency \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of an emergency, do we have your permission to take your child to a doctor if you cannot be reached?

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FEBRUARY  
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# MARCH 2015

APRIL  
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Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Communion worship 9, 10:30a<br>Sunday School: 8:45a<br>SS communion 9:05a<br>Adult choir sings 9a<br>Two-can Sunday                                         | 2 Book discussion 10a<br>Confirmation 6:30p<br>Yoga 6:30p                          | 3 Staff meeting 10a<br>Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a<br>Arc 10:30a<br>Financial Peace University Preview 7p | 4 ARC 10:30a<br>AA 7:30p                                                                                                         | 5 Hand bell rehearsal 6p<br>Adult choir 7p                                                                     | 6 Dinner preparation                                                     | 7 Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Lasagna dinner 5-7p                                                                 |
| 8 Move decks ahead one hour<br>Worship 9, 10:30a<br>Sunday School Storytelling 8:45a<br>Singing 8:45a<br>Hallel Hall in use 1-4p<br>Bring it! 10:30a          | 9 Book discussion 10a<br>Confirmation 6:30p<br>Yoga 6:30p                          | 10 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a<br>ARC 10:30a<br>Senior Lunch noon<br>Board of Religious Ed. 6p            | 11 ARC 10:30a<br>St. Jude's worship 11a<br>Creamery Brook worship 3p<br>AA 7:30p                                                 | 12 Hand bell rehearsal 6p<br>Adult choir 7p                                                                    | 13                                                                       | 14 Meatloaf Dinner 4-6p                                                                                         |
| 15 Worship 9, 10:30a<br>Sunday School 8:45a<br>Storytelling 8:45a<br>Adult choir sings 9a<br>Confirm. Sun. 10:30a<br>Lenten pot luck (6p)<br>& hymn sing (9p) | 16 Book discussion 10a<br>Yoga 6:30p                                               | 17 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a<br>ARC 10:30a<br>Financial Peace University 7p                             | 18 ARC 10:30a<br>Trustees' meeting 6:30p<br>Standing Comm. meeting 7:00p                                                         | 19 Hand bell rehearsal 6p<br>Adult choir 7p                                                                    | 20 <b>SPRING!</b>                                                        | 21 Youth Workers Recognition Dinner 6p                                                                          |
| 22 Worship 9, 10:30a<br>Sunday School "Bring it" 10:30a<br>Sr. P.F.<br>Food distribution Sun.                                                                 | 23 Book discussion 10a<br>Yoga 6:30p                                               | 24 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a<br>ARC 10:30a<br>Financial Peace University 7p                             | 25 ARC 10:30a<br>AA 7:30p                                                                                                        | 26 Hand bell rehearsal 6p<br>Adult choir 7p                                                                    | 27                                                                       | 28 Jr. Pilgrim Fellowship Event<br>Leave church 9:30 a<br>Return: 12:15-12:30p                                  |
|                                                                              | LOST OR FOUND<br>Something at church? There is a basket in the Information Center. | To place flowers in church during March, call Sue Tomlin (860.859.2876)                                      | Are the name and address correct on this mailing? If not, please get in touch with the church office to update your information. | Please check with Rev. Stan or Sandy before using our names as references. This courtesy would be appreciated. | Jr. & Sr. Pilgrim Fellowship activities. Watch the church worship folder | PLEASE NOTE: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (tables, chairs), call the church office. |

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**  
**SUNDAYS:**  
 Morning worship, 9a.m., 10:30 a.m.  
 Sunday School 8:45 a.m.  
 Coffee hour, 9:50 a.m., 11:30 a.m.  
 Children's Choir: 10:00-10:25 a.m.  
 Youth Choir: 10:00-10:25 a.m.  
 Junior & Senior Pilgrim Fellowship  
 Check church bulletin  
 The newsletter is posted on our website:  
[prestoncitycongregational.org](http://prestoncitycongregational.org)

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**  
**CANCELLATIONS:** Tune in to WICH, WCTY, WNLC, WKNL, or Television Channel 3 or you may check Facebook or our website: [prestoncitycongregational.org](http://prestoncitycongregational.org)  
 When Sunday School is cancelled, church is **NOT CANCELLED** unless specifically announced.

**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. Sheets with participating businesses listed are always available in the Information Center. 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).