

THE PRESTON PILGRIM

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



MARCH 2016

CHURCH ADDRESS

321 Route 164
Preston, CT 06365-8108

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WORSHIP

9:00 & 10:30 A.M.

(September - May)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:45 A.M.

(September - May)

EMAIL: PCCC@SNET.NET

WEBSITE: prestoncitycongregational.org

Visit us on **FACEBOOK**

News and information for the April newsletter is due in the church office by **March 20th**. You may leave information in the folder located on the wall in the kitchen.

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FROM THE MINISTER...



A large group of church members came out on a very cold February evening to attend the Annual Meeting of the church. Reports were accepted, the 2016 budget approved, as was the Nominating Report.

It was reported that night that our **\$60,000 loan** from the Northeast Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches for the renovation of the Sanctuary will most likely be "Paid In Full" by year's end! That's amazing - a ten-year note paid off in three years. Once again, our generous and hard-working congregation paid off a debt in record time! Well done, church.

The **web streaming** of church services should begin sometime this spring. The equipment has arrived and is being installed as I write. Very soon, we will be looking for volunteers to operate the cameras and produce a first-rate product for the web. Talk with Jim Wright or Patrick Magowan if you have an interest or any questions.

It was unanimous... those in attendance voted to begin the search for an Associate Minister. A committee was appointed that evening: Scott Van Alst (Chair), Shari Purcell (Secretary), Pat Marino, Sharon Breen, Bob Onderdonk, Barbara

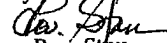
Perry, Sandy Dudek and myself. The search information has been posted on our website, as well as on the Fellowship's website. It is hoped that an Associate will be in place by summer. Pray that the right candidate will be found; someone who will help us continue to effectively tell the Good News, and meet the needs of an ever-growing congregation.

The membership voted to cover the outside of the stained glass window. Not only will it keep rain out, but it will protect the window from any potential danger. I'm happy to tell you that this work has been completed.

Great things are in store for the year ahead. I am so pleased that we have a congregation that works together, in many ways, to accomplish what needs to be accomplished. I'm honored to be among such fine people, and to serve as your Minister.

Have you read or received the 2015 Annual report? A few copies are still available. Let the office know if you'd like to receive a copy. We'll be happy to mail one to you.

See you in Church!


Rev. Stan

P.S. Don't forget to pray for your church daily!

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DON'T FORGET ...

Turn your clocks **AHEAD 1 hour** on **March 13**.
You don't want to be late for church!

DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY...

We expressed our sympathy to the family of **Rob Irvine** who passed away on February 1st after a courageous four-year battle with ALS. With wife Melissa and daughters Jillian, Julia, and Jenevieve by his side, Rob drew his final breath and entered eternity. He was a loving husband, father, and faithful friend to many – that was certainly evident throughout his illness and especially at the “Celebration of Life” gathering on February 7th, when approximately 400 friends packed the Preston Veterans Memorial School to share memories of Rob, and begin the healing process associated with such a tragic loss. Rob was a man of great faith. It sustained him all throughout the years and especially in the final week of his life. Rob believed he was going to heaven, a better place where he would be free from ALS. Rob will be missed, for sure. But the lessons he taught all of us these last four years will live on. Like: live each day as best you can, love your family, keep the faith, understand what is *most important* in life; not “things,” but others.

We expressed our sympathy to the family of **Shaun Barske** who passed away on February 20th. Shaun (and wife, Beverly) began attending the church in 2014, and soon became members. Shaun was a man of faith, a man who believed in prayer, heaven, and a God who would restore him to a life that was cancer free. Shaun never refused an opportunity to pray. Although he was in much pain in the final days of his life, he never wanted people to see it. He so enjoyed those who stopped by to visit him. Family was #1 to Shaun. That was clearly conveyed at his service on the February 27th. Please keep Beverly, and Shaun’s children, Shannon and Shane in your prayers.

We expressed our sympathy to the family of **Floyd Merriam** who passed away on February 24th, following a series of health issues and hospitalizations. Floyd was a gentle man, an incredible man of faith, a man who, in a kind way, spoke to people about the importance of the church and the faith. Floyd was always doing good things for others “behind the scenes” never seeking praise or credit. For years, before his wife’s passing, Floyd and Anne welcomed people to church on Sunday mornings. They always greeted church-goers with a smile. A service remembering Floyd’s life will be held at the church on March 30th, at 11 A.M. Every church needs at least one Floyd! We were blessed to have him in our midst for 22 years!

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THE CHRISTIAN FLAG

flying proudly on the annex lawn is given in memory of **Ernie Dupont**, by Shirley & Don Walsh.



HOLY WEEK and EASTER SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday, (3/20): Join us as we recall Jesus’ Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem with songs and palm branches. We’ll also welcome *new members* into the membership of the church. Following the services we’ll enjoy the *Bread Festival* at the coffee hour. Come and sample some tasty breads prepared by those in the congregation. The festival has become an established tradition in our church recalling Jesus as, “The bread of life!”

Maundy Thursday, (3/24): Be with us for a meaningful service recalling the evening before Christ’s crucifixion – the Last Supper, the garden of prayer, the betrayal, arrest, and trials of Jesus. A communion service will be held in the Sanctuary starting at 7 P.M. Plan to be present.

Good Friday, (3/25): A special service will be held on this very solemn day starting at noon. Many businesses as well as schools are closed so people may remember the day Christ died. Please don’t let this day be another “day off.” Come and worship, give thanks for what He was willing to do for YOU – die on a cross, so YOU could live forever with Him one day.

Following the service, a special event for children is planned (*see the Jr. Pilgrim*).

Easter, (3/27): Christ’s resurrection from the dead begins with an *Ecumenical Sunrise Service* at Amos Lake on Hollowell Rd. in Preston at 6:30. In the event of rain, the service will be held in our Sanctuary. Join with sister churches in Preston as we proclaim, “He is risen!”

The *Celebration of Easter* continues later that morning with two uplifting services of worship; 9 & 10:30. The choir will sing at both services, and a children’s message will be offered. The Sunday School will not be in session. Families are encouraged to worship together.

We hope to see you at some or all of these services.

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LOOKING AHEAD...

THE SEMI ANNUAL MEETING of the church is scheduled for April 10th, starting at noon. This is an all-church meeting and everyone is invited to attend. However, only church members may vote on issues that come up. Come and hear what’s happening in your church! We’ll meet in the Sunday School hall.

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SENIOR LUNCH

The last **SENIOR LUNCH** until the fall is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8th, starting at noon. A waiting list to attend this meal has been started. If you’re signed up to attend, and find that you are unable to be present, please call the office so someone on the wait list may attend. This wonderful program will begin again in November.

NEWCOMERS DINNER

We had such a good turn-out for the last dinner that we're doing it again! If you're new to the church within the last 6 months to a year, we invite you to join us for dinner here at the church on **Friday night, April 15th, at 6 P.M.** It's an opportunity for us to get to know you better, in a smaller setting. If you'd like to attend, please sign the sheet posted on the Information Center bulletin board. Please indicate how many will attend with you. This will be the last dinner until the fall, so we hope you will join us, enjoy a nice meal, and meet some wonderful people at the same time!

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DON'T MISS THIS!

By now, you've probably heard of Financial Peace University here at our church. But did you know we will soon be hosting a program just for teens called *Generation Change*?

Generation Change is a nine-week program about 60-90 minutes per session, designed to lead teens to a better understanding of God, themselves and their money - and how it all works together. In the teaching series, students are equipped with biblical principles to be who God created them to be, do more with their money, and go out into the world ready to write their story. Lesson videos with Dave Ramsey and his daughter, Rachel Cruze, along with engaging hands-on activities and discussion, are designed to bring new biblical and financial truths to this generation, making them a generation of change.

If you're interested in learning more about this program, please sign up on the Information center bulletin board. We'll be scheduling an information session in the near future.

--- Bob Vescovi, Financial Peace University coordinator

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CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

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 12). Place your contribution in an envelope marked "Scholarship Fund" and place it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church.

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

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DOOR MONITORS

Volunteers are needed to serve as door monitors on Sunday mornings during both services (*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.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

The number of individuals and families that continue to be helped at our pantry (thanks to your generosity and others in the community) continues to grow. However, funding for the "Toucan (*Two Can*) Food Pantry" has decreased considerably this year, affecting what we are able to do for those in need. So, we're trying something new. Envelopes with the information listed below are now available at the Information Center Bulletin board. Please consider taking one and making a donation to our food pantry. You can designate what you would like your donation to purchase; see the cost, and enclose the amount. Or, you can simply donate and allow pantry personnel to determine the greatest need. If you have any questions, please contact Stella Dawley (860.887.6452) or Harriet Rosiene (860.889.0238). Your contribution/envelope may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. Your help is needed and appreciated!



Please help us help others. Consider giving a financial gift to the Toucan Food Pantry today. You may designate what you would like your gift to purchase from the list of items below. Your contribution will go a long way in helping the growing number of families and individuals who count on our pantry from month-to-month.

___ Tuna (12 cans) \$8	\$ _____
___ Peanut Butter (12 jars) \$20	\$ _____
___ Canned Fruit (12 cans) \$12	\$ _____
___ Soup (12 cans) \$8	\$ _____
___ Mac & Cheese (12 boxes) \$5	\$ _____
___ Baked Beans (12 cans) \$6	\$ _____
___ Canned Vegetables (12 cans) \$8	\$ _____
___ Cereal (12 boxes) \$20	\$ _____
___ Pasta (12 boxes) \$10	\$ _____
___ Pasta Sauce (12 bottles) \$10	\$ _____
___ Toilet Paper (12-4pk) \$12	\$ _____
___ Jelly (12 jars) \$20	\$ _____
___ Rice (20lb bag) \$8	\$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

___ Use my gift for the greatest need \$ _____

Please make your check payable to:
The Toucan Food Pantry PCCC

PRESTON PILGRIM ONLINE

Did you know that you can now read the monthly newsletter online? Our website is: Prestoncitycongregational.org. If you prefer to read it online, saving the church the cost of mailing one to you, please sign the sheet on the Information Center bulletin board, or call the church office.

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CAN YOU HELP?

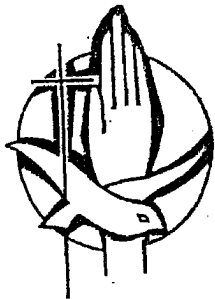
From time-to-time, people/families in our congregation are in need of a home-cooked meal. Maybe it's following a hospital stay, or when a baby is born, or upon the passing of a loved one, etc. If you're interested in helping out with this important outreach, please call meal coordinator Lois Woodmansee at 860.889.2128. *Thank you!*

The Preston Junior Pilgrim



Preston City Congregational Church Sunday School Newsletter

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:



CONFIRMATION...confirming baptismal vows my parents made when I was a child. The first thing a student learns when they enter Confirmation Class is just what Confirmation is. I am happy to say that ten young people declared their lives for Christ on Confirmation Sunday, February 28th, in front of a full house at church. It was a high and holy time in the life of our church. *Hannah Crary, Nathaniel Crary, Peter Crary, Nicholas Gileau, Jillian Irvine, Ethan Lehr, William Marconi Migliaccio III, Julia Rider, Robert Roark, and Michelle Wisniewski* became members of the church through the Rite of Confirmation. They have been given the privilege of voting as members on all church issues (except fiscal matters until the age of 18).

THEY had quizzes every week and exams to take, they had to attend a meeting in the church and do three service projects in different areas of the church. They had a trip to the funeral home that was optional. We thank Ken Sebastian for meeting with them at the funeral home as he has done for many years. Due to my health challenges this year Rev. Stan taught the class while I filled in when he was away. Fortunately I got to know these young people through their years in the Sunday School program. So it is definitely a proud and wonderful day when young people make their own decision to embrace the faith their parents first introduced them, to. I see leadership not only for now, but in adult years in the church. They are our future deacons, trustees, ministers (?), D.R.E.s (?), and I feel confident for the future of the church.

ON BEHALF OF his class, Ethan Lehr, presented the Class Gift of \$500 raised at their bake sale to Deacon Sharon Breen. It will be placed in the Helen and Winthrop Benjamin Memorial Scholarship Fund to assist young people attending college. In February, we had three outstanding young speakers who have received a scholarship through the church; **Hunter Bustamante, Jeff Talbot, and Heidi Willard**. As they shared their hopes and dreams and their accomplishments, it was heartwarming to hear their stories and how much it meant to them to have their church family believe in them and support them. Jeff Talbot will graduate this May from the School of Pharmacy.

GOD HAS RICHLY blessed us with all of these fine young people.

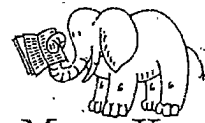
"And I am certain that God who began the good work in you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Jesus Christ returns." Philippians 1:6 NLT

May the **SON**shine through me,

Sandy Dudek

MARCH BIBLE VERSES

"Children, obey your parents..." (Ephesians 6:1) Grades Nursery 3- Grade 2)



Memory Verse

"...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:** 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.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL...Be sure to mark the dates – **July 11-15th**. We will be doing 'CAVE QUEST' ...**Following Jesus the Light of the World**" Shari Purcell and myself will be directing the school and think the kids will be very excited about the different format this year. We, with lots of help hopefully, will be transforming Sunday School rooms into caves when Sunday School is out the third week of May. We know a lot of our teens and college students will be good at this and provide great imagination!

YOUTH MISSION TRIP...Eligible are our present 8th graders through those who graduate high school this year. They must be registered in and actively attend the Sunday School (in attendance two Sundays per month of the current Sunday School year). The trip is to Washington D.C July 24-29th. Two more young people have signed up since our last newsletter. Call the Giulianos (860.376.8901) or the Van Alsts if you might have an interest in going.

THE GOOD FRIDAY EVENT for children Kindergarten through seventh grade will take place March 25th from 11:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m. We will attend the noon worship service, have lunch, and spend the afternoon engaged in activities to reinforce the meaning of "Good Friday." Registration forms for this Holy Week event are available on the Information Center table. There is no more meaningful place for a young person to be on Good Friday than in church! Any teens or adults who would like to lend a hand, speak to Sandy Dudek. **No signups will be taken the day of the event.**

THE RECOGNITION DINNER for everyone who works with our youth...Sunday School teachers, the Board of Religious Education, youth choirs leaders, and youth group leaders is **rescheduled** for Saturday, **April 2nd**, at 6:00 p.m. Much help is needed and many items are needed for this full course turkey dinner; there is a sign up sheet posted in the Information Center. Call or speak to Coordinator Sandy Dudek (860.887.4747) if you have questions.

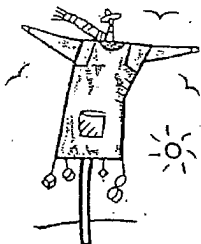
THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS made favors for our March senior luncheon. They continue to work on their class goal of missions...reaching out to others.

THE LASAGNA DINNER sponsored by the Sr. Pilgrim Fellowship and Youth Mission trip participants realized a profit of \$742.00. They wish to thank everyone who bought tickets or supported them in any way.

BRING IT...

is our Contemporary Young Adult Worship Service. If you or someone you know is between the ages of 14 to age 22, we're inviting you to this exciting way to worship. "Bring It" uses multiple forms of media, interactive demonstrations, and music to bring God's message to life. The worship service starts at 10:30 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. The **March** date is the 13th (the 27th is Easter-no Bring It) Please come and join us, invite someone to come with you, or tell someone about it.

ENVELOPES similar to those the adults use for worship are available to the children. Please ask me 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.



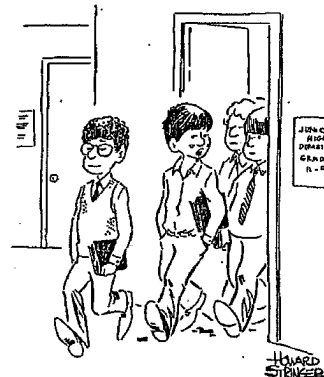
SCARECROW FESTIVAL
VENDORS & CRAFTERS WANTED!!!

REGISTRATIONS are now being accepted for this year's festival on Saturday, September 24. Vendors and crafters, can sell and promote their goods and services for just \$50 for a 10 x 10 space (or \$75 for a corner space). Forms and registration information is on our church website and also on the information table outside Halls' Hall. Space is first come, first served. For "Brand" vendors, registration is preferential to the previous year's vendors then becomes open to all on April 1.

REGISTER prior to May 1st and receive a \$10 early bird discount! Please tell anyone you know who would enjoy this fun fall festival while economically promoting their crafts, goods or business. Space is limited.

QUESTIONS can be directed to Nancy (Musa) & Joe Savino at scarecrowfestivalcrafters@hotmail.com or by calling 860.887.4647 or 860.376.2104.

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).



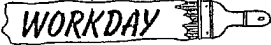
FEBRUARY							APRIL						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
28	29						24	25	26	27	28	29	30

MARCH 2016



CHURCH CLEAN UP

HELP us get the church yard and parking lots in shape for Easter. Bring your rakes and brooms to the church on March 19th, at 8 A.M. (rain/snow date 3/26). Please consider lending a hand. Coffee, juice, and donuts will be available. We should be finished by noon. There is a sign-up sheet on the Information Center bulletin board. See you there.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>To place flowers in church during March, sign the Flower chart in the narthex, and call Susan Tamis at 860.859.2876</i>	PLEASE CHECK with Rev. Stan or Sandy <u>before</u> using our names as references. This courtesy would be appreciated.	1 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a Financial Peace University 6:30p	2 AA 7:30p	3 Handbell rehearsal 6p Adult choir 7p	4	5
6 Communion worship 9,10,30a Sunday School 8:45a SS Communion 9:05a Adult choir 9a Two-can Sunday	7 Bible study 10a Deacons' meeting 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	8 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a Senior Lunch noon Board of Religious Ed. 6p Financial Peace University 6:30p	9 St. Jude's worship 11a Pastoral Search Committee 6:30p AA 7:30-8:30p	10 Handbell rehearsal 6p Adult choir 7p	11	12 Meatloaf Dinner 4-6p
13 Move clocks ahead one hour! Worship 9, 10:30a Sunday School 8:45a New members/Deacons Meeting 9:50/11:30a Bring II 10:30a Halls' Hall in use 1-6p	14 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	15 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a Financial Peace University 6:30p	16 Trustees' meeting 6p Standing Comm. Meeting 7p AA 7:30-8:30p	17 Handbell rehearsal 6p Adult choir 7p	18	19 Spring clean-up 8a-Noon.
20 Palm Sunday Worship 9, 10:30a New members Sunday Bread Festival Adult choir 9a Food distribution Sunday Spring begins!	21 Bible study 10a Scarecrow Festival Meeting 6:30p Yoga 6:30p	22 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a Financial Peace University 6:30p	23 Creamery Brook Worship 3p Adult choir 7p AA 7:30-8:30p	24 Maundy Thursday Communion worship service 7p	25 Good Friday Worship service noon Holy Week event 11:45a-2:30p	26 Rain date for Spring clean-up
27 EASTER! Sunrise service 8:30a If rain, Preston City Congregational Church Worship 9, 10:30a NO Sunday School	28 Bible study 10a Yoga 6:30p	29 Friends & Family Cafe 9-11:30a Financial Peace University 6:30p	30 AA 7:30-8:30p	31 Handbell rehearsal Adult choir 7p	PLEASE NOTE: Active church members who wish to borrow church property (table, chairs, etc.), call the church office.	LOST OR FOUND something at church? There is a basket in the Information Center.

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

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.

Is the name and address correct On this mailing? If not, please get in touch with the church office (860.887.4647) to update your information.