



**The Preston Pilgrim**  
the monthly newsletter of the  
Preston City Congregational Church  
"Gathering in Faith Since 1698"

**MARCH 2025**

Church Office Hours: Mon– Fri  
9AM – Noon

Minister Office Hours: Mon – Thu  
10A - 2P

**Minister**

Pastor Thomas, Burke, Jr.  
203-297-0254

[pastortompccc@gmail.com](mailto:pastortompccc@gmail.com)

**Minister Emeritus**

Rev. Stan White - 860 303-9622

[sewhite3022@gmail.com](mailto:sewhite3022@gmail.com)

**Have a question?  
Need help?**

Please call: The Office  
860 887-4647 or 860 886-7200

**WORSHIP AND WEB STREAM  
INFORMATION**

Worship service is at 9:30A  
For those who are unable to attend in-person, the service is streamed live. Go to [prestoncitycongregational.org](http://prestoncitycongregational.org) and click the stream button. Previous services may be viewed using the archive system on the site.

**WEEKLY EVENTS**

**Sunday Service** – 9:30A

**Sunday School** – 9:15A

**AA - Wednesday** – 7:30P

**Bible Study – Thursday** – 10:30A



Join us for fellowship, coffee and punch following our service.

**From the Desk of Pastor Tom,**

The Lenten season is upon us and with it the transition from winter to spring. This transition in seasons echoes the transition from Jesus' Galilean ministry to the Passion narrative and the path to the cross during his ministry in Jerusalem. Gone are the celebrations at the wedding at Cana and the circuit preacher traveling around Galilee teaching and healing the poor. Now Jesus begins his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, not on the back of a conquering warhorse, but humbly riding into the city of peace on the back of a donkey. The king we have does not hold a sword in his hand but a palm branch. Our time together has been full of celebrations, 325th anniversaries and parties that allow us to enjoy the life and history we have as a church. Lent is the time when we turn our attention towards the cross. I enjoy the celebrations and the levity that can be offered in worship, but now is the time we focus on Christ's sacrifice for us.

This is what is so great about the life of the church. We are free to pour out our grief in this sanctuary of God's beloved community or share the joys we experience throughout life. Transitions are difficult: winter into spring, joy into mourning. All these experiences are witnessed throughout the life of the church. We have witnessed many baptisms and experienced the Holy Spirit working in this place, and we have laid to rest those we love who have gone too soon. Worship represents the full spectrum of life, from birth to death and everything in between. God invites us to become active participants in life rather than passively watching from the sidelines. Baptisms, weddings, funerals, they all offer us a glimpse into the kingdom of God as we are invited to highlight the landmarks in our life with blessings from God. Transitions are difficult, but with God blessing our births, our marriages, and our families, we can be confident that new life is guaranteed.

As the snow turns to mud, and we watch the earth prepare for the new life that is to come in April, let us sit in the mud with Jesus for a bit. Let us walk with him as he suffers on the road to Golgotha for us. As he heads to the cross, let our eyes focus on him. This is a time of great solemnity for the church body; that does not mean we forget the levity of our festivals and celebrations, but it does mean taking the time to prepare the body of Christ for the cross. We are the body of Christ here on Earth that now bears the cross to bring the kingdom of God into existence here on Earth. As we enter into the Lenten season, let us not forget the shouts of joy on Palm Sunday as we wave palms and exclaim our excitement that our savior is here, even as we know that he is ending directly on the cross to sacrifice everything for us.

God bless.

**SPECIAL CHURCH MEETING CALL & AGENDA**

March 16, 2025 - Immediately following the 3:00 PM Vicinage Council

A Special Meeting of the Preston City Congregational Church will be held in the Sanctuary, on Sunday, March 16, 2025, immediately following the 3:00 PM Vicinage Council for the following action:

To vote on the recommendation of the Vicinage Council regarding the ordination of Thomas Burke on March 30, 2025.

Susan Brosnan  
Clerk

At this meeting, any church members present will constitute a quorum. All are welcome to attend; however, only active church members may vote.

## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

**A March Senior Luncheon is not scheduled but we have planned a Summer Picnic for Wednesday June 25<sup>th</sup> at noon. Please make a note of it.**

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**Sandy Dudek will be back in the office on Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Thank you to Hunter Bustamante for producing the Sunday worship folder during her absence.**

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### ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5<sup>th</sup>

Prayer Vigil - Noon – 6P

Sign-up sheet posted

Service – 7P



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**INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATIONS** Tune in to Television Channel 3 (WFSB), local radio stations or you may check Facebook, our website [prestoncitycongregational.org](http://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.

### TOUCAN FOOD PANTRY NEWS



#### March is Pasta Sauce Month!

Tomato, alfredo, marinara – share your favorite! Pasta with sauce is filling and can provide needed vitamins and minerals. There are low salt varieties available as well. What a difference a tomato sauce with basil, cheese or garlic would make to spice up a meal!

We are still accepting donations of cereal, including oatmeal, if you were unable to donate in February.

### CHOIR NEWS



**Practice will be on Sunday after our service starting March 2<sup>nd</sup>.** New and returning voices are always welcome.

Arrangements can be made for special music.

Contact Organist/Choir Director Trish Maerle or call (860) 705-5391.



The Men's Group will meet Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 10A.

### TRIVIA NIGHT IS COMING!

The Men's Group is planning a Trivia Night on

**Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.**



Do you enjoy Trivial Pursuit or Jeopardy? Getting together with friends?

Get your team together, test your collective brain, and secure your bragging rights to see which team can answer the most!

### ESCAPE ROOM BUILD

The BRE is developing a new escape experience based on Daniel 2-4. They are looking for mechanically-minded individuals and those who love solving puzzles to help create this project. Our next meeting is Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 5P. See Hunter Bustamante for more details.

### VBS NEWS

It is never too early to think about Vacation Bible School - July 7 - 11. Come have fun at "Road Trip, On the Road With God"! Come laugh and learn with Scout the dog.



### SCARECROW FESTIVAL 2025

Scarecrow Festival update:

The first round of vendor invitations go out March 1st.

Ideas or contacts for a magician/kids show still needed.

Next meeting to be announced.

**POLICY MANUAL** - Reminder to get all committee protocols in to Shari Purcell.

**OUR WARM CLOTHING DRIVE** is ongoing. Hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves are needed. Donations of coats of all sizes are welcome for men, women and children.



Warm sweaters and sweatshirts are also needed.

Items may be left in or on the Elizabeth Allyn box located to the right of the table in the mid-level hallway. Laurie Bowers is coordinating this mission. The need is always there. Thank you for your support.



**Daylight Savings Time Begins March 9<sup>th</sup>  
Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour!**

**The Preston Pilgrim is a monthly newsletter.** Please send in your submissions by March 15<sup>th</sup>, to be included in the April issue. Information may be left with the church office or **emailed to [susan.brosnan@gmail.com](mailto:susan.brosnan@gmail.com).**



*St. James Episcopal Church*

## 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Fish & Chips

**When:** Every Friday: 4:00 to 6:30 pm  
March 7th through April 11th

**Where:** St. James Episcopal Church  
95 Route 2A, Preston, CT

**Menu:** \$18.00 per dinner *Cash or credit/debit cards accepted*  
Baked, Fried or Combo Fish available  
All meals include french fries, coleslaw & a dessert.

*To place your order, start calling at 1:00 pm at 860-889-0150  
Or you can drive up in person.*

This is a Drive-Thru / Take-Out Only Event  
Dinner Pick-up time: 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm OR until sold out



**YOU ARE INVITED!**

At the Church Meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the voting members approved two special events for our church.

On Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, a Vicinage Council will convene at 3P, to determine whether to proceed with the ordination of Thomas J. Burke, Jr. A vote of the active church membership to accept their recommendation will follow.

Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 3P was set for the Ordination/Installation Ceremony. This solemn ceremony will include: speakers, music, an Ordination certificate and gift from the congregation, and a gift from the children. The installation ceremony follows, which is the formal pulpit appointment of Thomas J. Burke, Jr. as our Ordained Minister, as determined in our bylaws.

Plan to join your church family in joyous celebration of these special events in the life of our church.



**TRAVELS 2025**

**JOIN US** as we travel to Paris & London, November 12-20, 2025. All the details are posted on the mid-level bulletin board and brochures are available on the mid-level information table, as well as from the church office.

Here are some things you should know: If you'd like to join Rev. Stan on this amazing excursion, **you must make your reservation** directly with COLLETTE (the travel company we will use). Beginning January 2025, all reservations will be paperless. Call the Collette "Team Line" (800.581.8942) and speak with an agent who will book your reservation and answer any questions you may have.

Our group reservation number is **1308080**. You can speak with Madison (our "Group Specialist"), or any available agent. Just refer to the reservation number above.

At the time you make your reservation, a deposit of \$698 is needed per person, as well as \$549 payment, per person, for travel insurance (This is NOT required, but *highly recommended*. *Speak with an agent for details*.) If you'd rather register online, go to [gateway.gocollette.com/link/1308080](http://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1308080)

Your final payment is due August 14, 2025. Collette will send you the balance owed. If you have any questions, call Collette directly, not the church office. Remember, this trip is open to the community. Tell your family and friends!

Contact me directly (860.303.9622) if you have any general questions. I hope you can join us.  
Rev. Stan



**WELCOME SPRING!**

**MARCH 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Thoughts from a friend...**

"I don't always carry all of the groceries on one arm, but when I do, my keys are in the wrong pocket."