

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

JULY 2025

Church Office Hours: Mon– Fri
9AM – Noon

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

OFFICE CLOSED Fri July 4th

Minister

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

pastortompccc@gmail.com

Minister Emeritus

Rev. Stan White - 860 303-9622

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 and click the stream button. Previous services may be viewed using the archive system on the site.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Service – 9:30A

AA - Wednesday – 7:30P

Bible Study – Thursday – 10:30A



LEMONADE ON THE LAWN

**Join us for fellowship and a cold
drink following our service.**

From the Desk of Reverend Tom,

The summer months give us the opportunity to celebrate God's creation and abundance. Holidays give us the chance to pause from our labor and gather to remember our history and traditions. Last year we celebrated our 325th anniversary, which makes us older than our nation itself. July 4 marks the 249th year of American independence. Next year we will celebrate 250 years as a nation. Independence had its foundation in the congregational church. The freedom through Christ that was preached and praised on Sunday mornings throughout Connecticut during the 17th century, set the stage for our nation's independence that would come in 1776.

In Galatians, Paul tells us that before Christ came we would be subject to kings, but now that faith has come, we are free. The yolk of tyranny that our founding fathers threw off originated in our pilgrim ancestors who escaped religious persecution to start a new world. We still have this independence in our DNA which has kept us thriving for 325 years. Right now, Hunter Bustamante and Lisa Van Alst are in St. Louis, Missouri in fellowship with the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Each member of this association has a commitment to independence, but also to each other's wellbeing.

Jesus prayed that we would all be one. While there are many denominations and associations, we are free to find the one that feels best for us. Not because religion is about what feels right, but because God created us to follow Him. Jesus tells us that his people will recognize his voice and follow him. God gave us the independence and freedom to follow his voice wherever it calls us too.

This Independence Day, as you gather at the beach or at the pool, as temperatures soar to 100, let the Holy Spirit of independence cool your bodies and souls. God breaks our chains and wants us to be free. Jesus wants us to use that freedom to follow him. Jesus tells us that whoever drinks the water he gives us will never be thirsty again. Let us drink of the water of independence and celebrate the freedom that God has given us.



NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

Scholarships were awarded on **June 22nd**. Recipients were Brock Nowakowski, who will be attending Bryant University and plans to major in Actuarial Science and

Brenden Hopkins, who plans to study Computer Science at Tiffin University in Ohio. Congratulations!

Thank you to all who have supported our students since 1992 who are continuing their education.

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

Jonathan Stearnes has enlisted in the Marines. A recent high school graduate, he will be training in Electrical Aviation.

Amelia Stearnes is studying Forensic Accounting at Eastern Connecticut State University. Amelia earned many AP (Advanced Placement) credits in high school and will graduate in three years instead of four! She is loving school and will be starting her third year.

Your church family shares in the pride your family has for all of your achievements. Sandy Dudek



We expressed our sympathy to the family of Lowell Calkins who passed on June 18, 2025. A funeral service was held June 26, followed by a reception.

REMEMBER - INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATIONS can refer to many situations. If you are unsure if the church is open, follow the instructions below.

Tune in to Television Channel 3 (WFSB), local radio stations or you may check Facebook, 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.

Active members who wish to borrow items from the church (chairs, tables), please check with the office. They may have been requested by someone else! **There is now a form to fill out to help keep track of borrowed items.**

TOUCAN FOOD PANTRY NEWS



Wicked Tulips Flower Farm has donated \$581.10 to our pantry from their paid flower-wrapping program. We thank their management team for recommending our pantry.

CHOIR NEWS

Summer Choir has started! Voices are always welcomed, even if only for one Sunday! We will meet at 9A, before our morning service to practice well-loved hymns. Also, if anyone wants to sing in "Summer Choir" they can pick up a music packet in the choir office.

See Organist/Choir Director Trish Maerke or call (860) 705-5391 for information.



On June 8th, 2025, we welcomed into the Household of Christian Faith through the sacrament of Baptism, Archie Taylor Burke, the son of Reverend Thomas and Gretchen Burke.

We ask God's blessing on this little one.

The Men's Group will not meet in July and August. They will return in September.

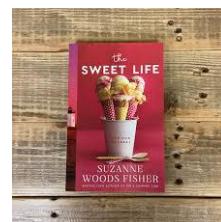


Thoughts from a friend...

"In three words I can sum up everything
I have learned about life: it goes on."

Robert Frost

The Woman's Fellowship is doing a summer book club. We will be reading "The Sweet Life" by Suzanne Woods Fisher. It's available on Amazon, Christian Book, Walmart & Target. We will be meeting on Saturday, Sept. 6th to discuss the book. All women from the community are welcome to join us for the Summer Book Club.



Bridget Park

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!



Noah Klewin ~ Wheeler
Sadie Daniewicz ~ NFA
Brock Nowakowski ~ NFA
Brenden Hopkins ~ Griswold
Jonathan Stearnes ~ Griswold

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
and MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!**



VBS July 7th – 11th

Plan to join us for a week of fun-filled activities. Shari Purcell has all of the information you need!

NEW this year is an extended day option for children who could not attend the half-day sessions: VBS PITSTOP! Bring a bagged lunch, attend VBS from 9A to noon and then have a fun-filled afternoon of games and crafts. Pickup is at 5P. See Lisa Van Alst for more information.



**Remember: The Office will be CLOSED
for the holiday.**



In case you need something to look forward to with cooler weather: our Christmas Bazaar is scheduled for Saturday, November 22nd.

TRAVELS 2025

**Paris & London,
Rescheduled**

November 5 -13, 2025



COLLETTE and the church are offering this trip to the congregation and community.

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

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.

Beginning in the fall, Lee Ann Fessenden will become our church contact.

**NEWS FROM THE SUPPER
COMMITTEE**



Thank you to everyone who made our Chicken BBQ a success!

On Saturday, June 14, 2025, Preston Boy Scout Troop 75 celebrated their 60th year anniversary under our pavilion. Our own **Sandy Dudek** was honored with the Liz Harris Memorial Award for 'always being there to help them out and to support them'. This was only the eighth time the award has been presented. Sandy was COMPLETELY surprised by this nomination (not an easy task!) and honored by their recognition of her support.

