



**The
Preston
Pilgrim**
the monthly
newsletter of the
Preston City
Congregational
Church

"Gathering in Faith Since 1698"

May 2026

Church Office Hours:
Mon– Fri 9AM – Noon
Minister Office Hours:
Mon, Tu, Thu 10A - 2P

OFFICE CLOSED
MONDAY MAY 25
MEMORIAL DAY

Minister

Reverend 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
Sunday School – 9:15A
AA - Wednesday – 7:30P
Bible Study – Thursday – 10:30A



Join us in Halls' Hall
for fellowship, coffee
and punch following
our service.

FROM THE DESK OF REV. TOM ...

It looks like spring weather is finally here and, as the saying goes, "April showers bring May flowers." Down the road from Preston City Congregational Church, Wicked Tulips has been open for visitors to stroll through the largest tulip field in New England. Over one million tulips can be found walking through beautiful farmland. As Christians who are grateful for God's creation, tulips don't just offer us their beauty, but we can also learn from how they are grown and cultivated. Just as our faith in God plants a seed in our bodies and souls, we can watch them bloom and grow with the right conditions and coordination.

Growing tulips doesn't just happen overnight, it takes months of planning and preparation. Tulips start as bulbs that are planted during the fall months between September and December, before the first hard frost. They need to be planted six to eight inches deep in the ground so they can make roots that will help them build the nutrients they need to grow. These roots begin growing during the autumn months before any sign of the tulip popping out of the ground. They require a cold winter and dormant season to get them ready for when they will bloom in spring. During February and March, they begin to grow out of the ground and sprout leaves. Finally, in spring, they begin to bloom to show their beauty, but it isn't until all this hard work behind the scenes has been completed.

Our faith works much in the same way as tulips growing. A seed is planted, for some of us, that starts as children when our families introduce us to God. For others, it doesn't begin until much later when we come in contact with God. There needs to be good soil in which to plant, our bodies and souls need to be prepared to receive the seed. That comes through character development, education, and studying God's word and works. The seed needs to be planted deep or the effects of life will prevent it from growing roots. Once the roots have taken hold, sometimes our faith goes through a cold winter. We experience sadness and loss that could destroy the flower if not planted properly. Then as our faith matures, we begin sprouting leaves that show the effects of our devotion. Finally, when our faith has the strength and nutrients it needs, it blooms into a beautiful flower that others can see.

This cycle rolls over year after year, our faith is not static, it is dynamic and needs to be nurtured and given attention every year. Even after the growing season is done, the most important step is regeneration. After the flower fades, the foliage stays to feed the bulb for next year's growth. We are able to provide an example and provide nutrients for the flowers around us to bloom. It is our responsibility to help others in their faith journey instead of competing with them for light. As we make our way through spring, take time to stop and smell the flowers, because God made them just as God has made you.

God bless.

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

I was so happy to hear that **Brent Fessenden** was accepted into the National Junior Honor Society! On his cover letter he speaks about our church and his faith. Your church family is ever so proud of you, Brent!! Parents are Loida and Joshua Fessenden; grandparents are Lee Ann and Tom Fessenden. Blessings to all, Mrs. Dudek

More great news

Derek Waldron who grew up in the Sunday School and was confirmed here is now **REVEREND DEREK WALDRON!**

He was ordained Sunday, April 19, 2026 in West Congregational Church in Concord, New Hampshire. Derek helped me in the leadership of the Sunday School when he was here; I am just a little bit proud. But not nearly as much as his parents John and Laurie Waldron. Being called by the Lord to ministry in his name is no small thing.

Your church wishes you many blessings on this journey, Derek! May the SONshine through me, Sandy Dudek

INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATIONS Tune in to Television Channel 3 (WFSB), local radio stations or you may check Facebook or our website:

prestoncitycongregational.org. When Sunday School is cancelled, church is NOT CANCELLED unless specifically announced.



THE SUPPER COMMITTEE'S "LADLES OF LOVE" has ended for the season. Thank you to our chefs and to those who supported their efforts: \$2250 will be donated to the church budget.

We are looking forward to more 'soup of the month' in the fall!

OUR ITEMS-OF-THE-MONTH FOR MAY ARE CONDIMENTS. Salt, pepper, ketchup, mustard, relish, mayonnaise, salad dressing, sugar and spices, are welcomed!

May 3rd is "Two-Can Sunday" but donations are always welcome. Items may be left in the baskets near the church entries or at the church office. There are envelopes on the bulletin board in the main hallway for monetary donations and ideas for needed items.



Food
Pantry
Ministry



MEN'S GROUP

Please join the Men's Group for a light brunch at coffee hour following our service on May 10th, as they honor the women in our church.

The Men's Group is sponsoring a trip to Lancaster, PA, August 26 - 28. Cost is \$569 per person for double occupancy. \$200 deposit due May 15th and final payment is due June 15th. Checks should be made out to Preston City Congregational Church (PCCC) and given to Bob Vescovi or the church office. Trip cancellation insurance is available to purchase. Flyers are available at the church and at the end of this newsletter.

Thoughts from a friend...

It's not what you look at that matters,
it's what you see.

- Henry David Thoreau



Our next Book Club meeting is May 16th at 10A and our book is **Theo of Golden**, by Allen Levi.



Thank you from Our Women's Fellowship for supporting our 'Baby Shower' for the month of April. Many will benefit from your thoughtfulness.



CHOIR PRACTICE is on Sunday after our service. New and returning voices are always welcome.

Arrangements can be made for special music. See Organist/Choir Director Trish Maerkle or call (860) 705-5391.



Scarecrow Festival Needs a Fabulous Foursome!

We are looking for a Team of 4 people to work together on gathering 10 items each for the Silent Auction that is held during the Scarecrow Festival. Items are gift certificates and other items donated by area businesses and individuals. Can you help us with this task? If so please let Kim Lang, Debra LaBree, or Sandy Dudek know.



News from Hunter Bustamante Interim DRE

Upcoming Events

May

May 3rd + May 10th - Children's Day Preparation
 May 3rd is a run-through of class goals
 May 10th will be a full rehearsal of Children's Day
 May 17th - 9:30 Service: Children's Day

June

The BRE is planning a hiking activity for June,
 Location and Date TBD
 June 22nd - 26th - Vacation Bible School: Snowball
 Mountain Challenge.
 June 28th - July 2nd: National Association of
 Pilgrim Fellowship and Heritage Of Pilgrim
 Endeavor (NAPF/HOPE) conference in Westfield,
 Massachusetts at Westfield University.

Our bake sale for Samson was a huge success, we
 made \$345. THANK YOU to everyone who
 contributed baked goods and thank you for your
 purchase, we really appreciate the support.

The Sunday School will be sharing a wish list of
 items to assist the Phillips family as they rebuild
 their lives from the fire that destroyed their home.

National Day of Prayer Service will be held under
 our pavilion on **Thursday, May 7th at 5:30P.**



Our SPRING YARD SALE is
 planned for May 16th,
 from 8A -2P.
 May 23rd is the rain date.
 Donations are now being
 accepted. Please contact Stella

Dawley for drop off times. Donations will also be
 accepted the day of the sale.

**Please do not leave anything outside at the
 church or annex when no one from the
 committee is able to meet with you.**

Just a reminder:

No clothing, paint, computers, outdated electronics,
 tires, air conditioners or other bulky items. We are
 unable to accept baby/infant products such as cribs or
 car seats.



TRUSTEES

Spring Cleanup went well.
 Thank you to all who helped, it was
 greatly appreciated.

The new front steps have been installed.

MEMORIAL DAY – MONDAY, MAY 25th

**Remembering those who gave their lives
 for our freedom.**



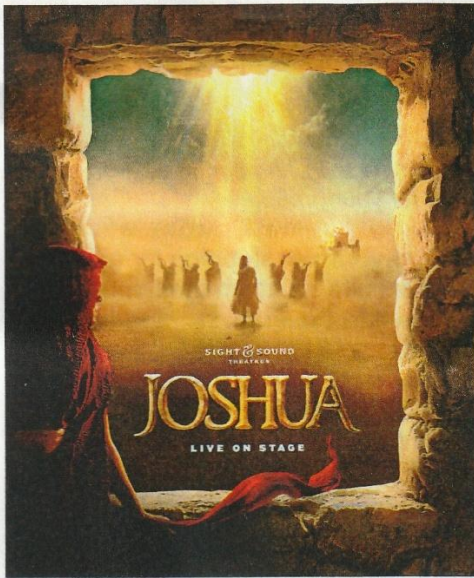
**The greatest love you can have for your friends
 is to give your life for them.**

John 15:13 GNT



**We will be back at
 Strawberry Park Bingo this
 summer!** PCCC is one of the
 non-profit organizations that
 assist at the games selling cards.

Funds received are used to offset our budget.
 We need three workers to sell cards at each session. Do
 you have a Personal Identification Number (PIN)
 necessary to help? The office has the information and
 forms available to get you started if you don't!
 You must be a church member to receive a PIN.
Thank you to those who sign up to assist and continue
 to make this a successful mission for our church. A list
 of available dates will be posted on our bulletin board
 soon!



SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF LANCASTER, PA

Featuring Sight & Sound's "JOSHUA"

3 DAYS - 2 NIGHTS

AUGUST 26 - 28, 2026

\$569 Per Person
Double Occupancy

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Jacob's Choice



- * 2 Nights lodging
- * 2 Breakfasts
- * 2 Dinners including a Smorgasbord dinner & meal at Amish home
- * Performance of **JOSHUA** at the Sight & Sound Theatre with **PREFERRED SEATING**
- * Guided Tour of the Amish Countryside, including stops at an Amish Craft Farm & Bake Shop Plus the Amish Experience film presentation of *Jacob's Choice*
- * Kitchen Kettle Village
- * Li'l Country Store & Miniature Horse Farm
- * Souvenir Gift
- * Luggage Handling
- * Taxes & Meal Gratuities
- * Motorcoach Transportation



Cancellation insurance available & highly recommended; see reverse side for details.

FOR INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS CONTACT:

PRESTON CITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Bob Vescovi
321 Route 164
Preston, CT 06365
(401) 583-7840

The Lil
COUNTRY STORE
and Miniature Horse Farm



WHITE STAR TOURS

26 E. Lancaster Avenue, Reading PA 19607 * 610-775-5000 * 800-437-2323 * www.whitestartours.com

SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

3 Days - 2 Nights

The sample itinerary described below is approximately like the itinerary your group will be following during your stay with WHITE STAR TOURS. However, the exact times, days, and destinations may vary for your group.

- Day 1** Depart from your hometown and travel to the **Amish Lands of Pennsylvania**, stopping for rest and lunch on your own along the way. Check into your lodging for the next two nights in the Lancaster, PA area - then depart for **smorgasbord dinner** at a popular restaurant in the area.
- Day 2** After breakfast at the hotel, depart aboard your bus for a **guided tour of the Amish Countryside**, including stops at an Amish Craft Farm and a bake shop. Your **Amish Experience** also includes **Jacob's Choice**, a 35-minute, five-screen, special-effect film presentation (at the F/X Theater) about the Amish. The emotional story is told through the everyday lives of the fictional Fisher Family, an Old Order Amish family which is accurately portrayed living and working in today's world. Witness young Jacob's struggle in choosing the Amish church, or leaving behind family and community for the allure of the modern world. Experience the horrendous religious persecution of their forefathers and take part in the perilous voyage to America, all magically heightened by wind, rain, smoke, fire, ghostly and other immersive special effects that thrill the senses. Jacob's challenges with faith, tradition, and loved ones in a fast-changing world is a story that touches each of us, young and old, in a poignant and memorable way. More than any other Amish attraction, "Jacob's Choice" will leave you with an understanding of what it means to be Amish, and the ties that continue to bind the community together through the centuries. Later, you will enjoy lunch on your own at **Kitchen Kettle Village** in the town of Intercourse where you'll have time to browse in the unique specialty shops displaying everything from local art to fine leather coats, quilts, accessories, and pottery. In mid-afternoon you will arrive at the **Sight & Sound Theatre** to see an original, brand-new, live performance of **JOSHUA**. From the banks of the Jordan River to the towering walls of Jericho, **JOSHUA** is a miraculous adventure. Journey alongside the people of Israel as they navigate their new-found freedom in an unforgiving wilderness. When Joshua is called to replace Moses as their faithful leader, tensions mount in the midst of dwindling supplies and approaching armies. With one last fortified city standing between the Israelites and the Promised Land, unexpected help emerges from behind enemy lines and Joshua's trust in God's plan is put to the ultimate test. Experience one of the most redemptive stories of the Bible as it comes to life for the very first time. **Dinner** awaits you at an Amish Homestead after the show.
- Day 3** Following breakfast, check out and depart for a visit to the **Lil' Country Store & Miniature Horse Farm**, a place of discovery and fun for every age. Pet the friendly miniature horses; try some homemade root beer; and browse in the country store filled with delicious treats and captivating gifts. After your visit, depart for home - taking with you enriching memories of your vacation in the heart of **Pennsylvania Dutch Country**.

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING WHITE STAR TOURS TO BE A PART OF YOUR TRAVEL PLANS!



TRIP CANCELLATION PROTECTION

Cancellation protection is encouraged for medical emergencies that may occur. The **Enhanced option must be paid within 14 days** from the day the first deposit for the trip is paid to the organization and/or group leader. There is an additional Enhanced upgrade - **Cancel for Any Reason**. Cancellation must be made no later than 48 hours prior to your scheduled departure, conditions, limitations, and exclusions do apply. These plans are only valid for trips booked through White Star Tours. To purchase the protection, please contact NTA/AON Insurance via their website at <https://nta.aontravelprotect.com> and provide the **Tour Operator Location #386097**.