



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

"Gathering in Faith Since 1698"

**June 2026**

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

**Minister**

Reverend 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  
**AA - Wednesday** – 7:30P  
**Bible Study** – Thursday – 10:30A



Join us for Lemonade on  
the Lawn and fellowship  
following our service.  
Refreshments will be in  
Halls' Hall if we have  
inclement weather.7

**FROM THE DESK OF REV. TOM ...**

It has been a rainy April and May, but now that we find ourselves in June, the growing season is finally here. The birds are singing every morning, the sunlight is shining, and the trees are almost all grown in. In John 15:5, Jesus tells us that He is the Vine and we are the branches. The summer is a wonderful opportunity to stop and reflect how our faith helps us grow stronger in the same way the light helps tree branches grow more full. The trees spread their leaves in order to receive sunlight and absorb the energy that comes with it. Every summer we see the fullness that God's creation has to offer and it allows us to recognize how Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

In John 15, Jesus explains that true spiritual fruit cannot grow unless you stay attached to the main vine. Just as summer plants need intense sunlight to thrive, your spirit requires intentional, consistent exposure to God's presence. June serves as a seasonal cue to check your "spiritual root system" and see what is draining your energy versus what is feeding your faith. We need a good environment, healthy soil, and the necessary resources to help us continue to grow and thrive. Growing a strong spiritual root system will help us to weather the storms that inevitably come during life.

Take this June to reflect on your own spiritual root system. In order to grow in a healthy environment, plants and trees need to be pruned and trimmed. Reflect on what habits, distractions, or negative mindsets God is asking you to cut away this season to make room for new growth. In the same chapter, Jesus tells us to abide in the light, so take some time to rest this season as well in order to prepare for the fall and winter. Spend time in quiet prayer and enjoy time with your family and friends. Let them strengthen you and share your light with them. Identify and discern what gifts of the spirit have been growing inside of you and share them with the rest of your community. Some of those gifts are gentleness, patience, joy, and kindness and can be contagious when you share them with others. A healthy spiritual root system will allow others to grow and thrive when we are in balance with God and nature.

This month take the time to sit and watch the sunset; leave your phone inside and breathe God's creation in. Read a verse from the Bible and reflect on how your life is a branch and Jesus is the vine. His love is the light that we can absorb to use as energy to grow. Let the warmth of the sun remind you of God's constant presence in your life. When we are strong and healthy, we can help shape strong and healthy communities. God wants you to share your joy and shine your light, so this June let your light shine for others to see.

God bless.

Rev. Tom

## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

Sandy Dudek – Pastor's Administrative Assistant

**CONGRATULATIONS! LAURIE BOWERS** has received an Associate's Degree in General Studies at Three Rivers Community College in General Studies. What an accomplishment for someone who does as many things as Laurie does! Your church is proud of you.

**I RECENTLY** had the pleasure of being present when something pretty special happened here at the church on the right wall inside the double doors.

I put a title to the following article written about it by **Donna Sebastian...**

### A MEANINGFUL GIFT!

During our move I was going through some boxes that were in the attic. At first glance, one of the boxes had scrap pieces of fabric. Thinking I had no use for it, I was going to throw it out. But something told me to look under the pieces of fabric, and I discovered an unfinished quilt. After looking closer, I realized it was a treasure of history. In 1939 a group of ladies (they were part of the Saturday Afternoon Club) with very strong ties to PCCC were working on the quilt. It was 75% done with some squares still not put together. For whatever reason, it was never finished. But a relative of the Sebastian family, J. Pearl Holden, was in possession of the quilt. Upon her passing the quilt ended up in our attic. It was too precious not to do something. On our trip to Lancaster, PA, I found an Amish shop that was willing to finish the quilt and even hand quilted each square. They did a great job honoring the longevity and history of the quilt. At last, this long forgotten and almost discarded beautiful quilt had found its proper place to be enjoyed by many for years to come.

A very special thank you to Jeff Parkhurst for hanging the quilt; it is very much appreciated.



Donna Sebastian points out the square signed by the quilters. A plaque with the list of names will be displayed for all to read.

### THE QUILTERS

Betty Allyn  
Emily A. Ayer  
Evangeline Barnes  
Janice C. Bausch  
Gladys Benjamin  
Minnie Benjamin  
Hazel Bogel  
Mary G. Caulkins  
Annie E. Clark  
Emily Clark  
Ruth Conlin  
Doris L. Crary  
Harriet B. Crary  
Ida J. Crary  
Lydia M. Crary  
Margery W. Dawley  
Elizabeth DeWolfe  
R.E. Fiedler  
Jennie Frink  
Alice M. Geistardt  
Alice D. Hall

Marion G. Hall  
Dell Haskell  
J. Pearl Holden  
H.G. Jones  
Florence Kennedy  
Laura Kennedy  
Ethel Krug  
Mary W. Maloney  
M.A. Manning  
Rose McAvoy  
Esther McClimon  
Edythe P. Muttart  
Marion P. Muttart  
Emma G. Park  
Marion E. Park  
Catherine C. Sebastian  
Connie M. Shedd  
Mary E.M. Shedd  
Margaret Smith  
Mary Stafford  
Connie R. Warren



### Our SPRING YARD SALE

netted \$1607.50 which is given towards our budget. Thank you to Stella and her crew, for set-up, sales, and clean-up, and to our donors and shoppers.

**FOOD PANTRY  
OUR ITEM-OF-THE-MONTH FOR JUNE IS  
CEREAL.**

June 7<sup>th</sup> is "Two-Can Sunday"; donations are always welcome. Items may be left in the baskets near the church entries or at the church office.



Food  
Pantry  
Ministry

Thank you for the condiment donations in May. Patrons were thankful to be able to pick up a canister of salt or bottle of ketchup

along with their regular staples! Your extra donations make this happen!



**We thank the Men's Group** for

the light brunch at coffee hour following our service on May 10<sup>th</sup>, as they honored the women in our church.

Their next meeting is Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.

**The Men's Group** is sponsoring a trip to Lancaster, PA, August 26 - 28. Cost is \$569 per person for double occupancy. Down payment has been extended through June 15<sup>th</sup>. 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.

FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS -- All are welcome to join us on this trip. Please pass along the information.

**Thoughts from a friend...**

"Be kind to people.

Not because they're nice, but because you are."

Stephen Colbert



**Choir Appreciation** day is on June 28.

Join us as we honor our faithful choir!

Summer choir sings from July 5 through Sept 6.

Regular choir resumes on Sept. 13 (which is the Sunday after Labor Day).

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

**NEWS FROM THE DEACONS**



**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS** may be found on the small table in the mid-level hallway or obtained by calling the office beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>. A scholarship is awarded to an applicant working toward

their first degree (certificate, Associate, or Bachelor's).

**Active involvement in the church** is one of the criteria used in determining this award.

**Completed forms are due** in the church office by **June 17<sup>th</sup>**. The scholarship(s) will be awarded on June 28<sup>th</sup> during the worship service.



**News from the Scarecrow Festival Committee**

We've had several meetings and are well under way in planning our 2026 Event on Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>! Fire House

Parking on Krug Road & the Preston City Fire House, Rabbi Jack, and the Petting Zoo, and Food to Sell have all been confirmed, as well as many crafters/vendors. The Bake Sale, Craters/Vendors, Scarecrow/Main Street, Antique Cars, and Quilt Drawing Coordinators have all been identified!

Still need to finalize Silent Auction event and Activities to offer on the Field of Dreams throughout the day. Suggestions have been: crafts to Make & Take, Skillet Toss, Cannonball Throw, Obstacle Course, and Corn Hole.

If you can help put some of the pieces together for this yearly Free Family Fun Day to connect with the community, please join us at the next meeting - Keep watching the Sunday bulletin for meeting times and updates.

Kim Lang



- **VBS 2026**
- **WE ARE LOOKING** for a few more volunteers to help lead groups from activity to activity. The dates will be June 22nd to June 26th from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. VBS itself will run from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. If you are interested in volunteering, please give me a call or send a text at 860-383-5175. You can also send me an email at [interim.DRE.pccc@gmail.com](mailto:interim.DRE.pccc@gmail.com)!
- VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is fast approaching so make sure that you get your registrations in as soon as possible! You can either pick up a hard copy at church on the table in the Fessenden Foyer or you can sign up online at <https://www.myvbs.org/june-22nd-26th>! The cost is \$10.00 per student
- GO AND TELL all of your friends about VBS, we want to share this fun week of activities with everyone we possibly can
- PLEASE JOIN the Sunday School on June 14th for a hike to the Arcadia Management Area. Following our usual Sunday service, we will meet briefly in Dudek Hall to discuss directions. We will then depart the church in separate vehicles to head to the trail. Following our hike we will go to Next to Nowhere Creamery to get ice cream! There is a sign up sheet on the mid level bulletin board. The Arcadia Management Area's address is 260 Arcadia Rd, Hope Valley, RI 02823
- WE ARE ALSO looking for teachers to help staff the Sunday School for the upcoming Sunday School year. While the summer is just beginning, we are already hard at work planning for the new school year. If you are interested in helping to shape the young minds of our church, then please send me an email at [interim.dre.pccc@gmail.com](mailto:interim.dre.pccc@gmail.com) with your phone number so that I can get in touch with you as soon as possible
- Hunter Bustamante, Interim DRE
- 

**PCCC IS BACK AT STRAWBERRY PARK BINGO**



**THIS SUMMER!** We have more sessions and would welcome some more volunteers.

We are one of the non-profit organizations that assist at the games selling cards. Funds

received are used to offset our budget.

**A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is no longer necessary to help!**

Just check the list of available dates posted on our bulletin board, pick your date, and sign up! For more information contact Lee Ann Fessenden or Lisa Fessenden.

**Thank you** to those who sign up to assist and continue to make this a successful mission for our church.



**Women's Fellowship**

Our schedule for the remainder of the year has been revised. All gatherings are on Saturday @10am going forward. The

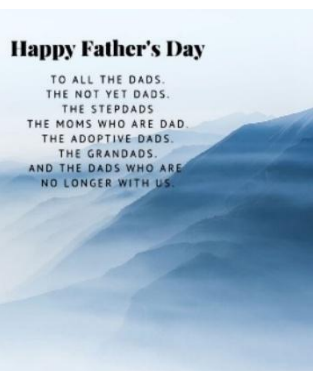
June meeting is cancelled. See schedule below. Book Club-Our next book is " If a Church Pew Could Talk" by Cindy Garraway Williams. We will meet on July 11th to discuss the book @ 10am at the church. The Paint Party was lots of fun. We made a profit of \$55 and took home a new piece of "art" to boot. Thank you to those who attended. The funds will be used to support the kindness bags and birthday bundles to be created later this year.

Bridget Park

| Date       | Time | Place  |                  |
|------------|------|--------|------------------|
| 08/08/2026 | 10am | Church | Kindness Bags    |
| 10/10/2026 | 10am | Church | Birthday Bundles |
| 12/03/2026 | 10am | Church | Christmas Cards  |

**Book Club**

| Date       | Time | Title                        | Place       |
|------------|------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 07/11/2026 | 10am | "If a Church Pew Could Talk" | Halls' Hall |
| 09/05/2026 | 10am | TBD                          | Halls' Hall |
| 11/07/2026 | 10am | TBD                          | Halls' Hall |



June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026

# Free Family Fun For All!

Enjoy the day at the 17th Annual  
Preston City Congregational Church



## Scarecrow Festival

Saturday Sept. 26, 2026

10-4pm 321 Route 164 Preston, CT

**Scarecrow Contest** - Prizes for children, adult, and business entries

**Vendors and Crafters**

**Antique Cars**

**Petting Zoo**

**Tractors on Display**

**Games & Activities for All Ages**

**Musical Entertainment**

**Bake Sale**

**Crow's Nest Food Area**

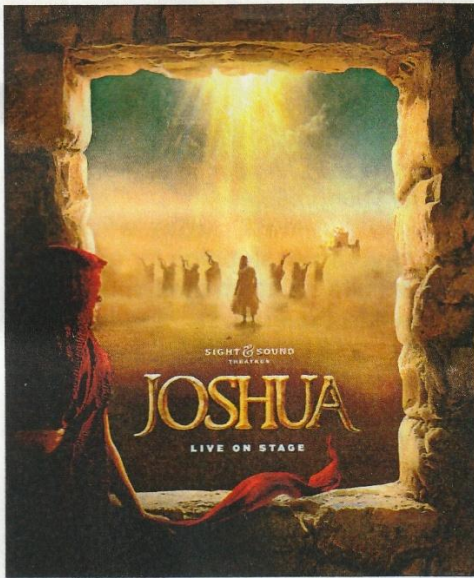
**Quilt Drawing**

**Silent Auction**

**For more information:**

860-887-4647

[www.prestoncitycongregational.org](http://www.prestoncitycongregational.org)



# 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:

- \* 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

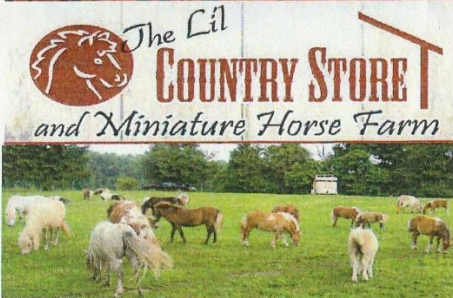
Jacob's Choice



**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**



**WHITE STAR TOURS**

26 E. Lancaster Avenue, Reading PA 19607 \* 610-775-5000 \* 800-437-2323 \* [www.whitestartours.com](http://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 FX 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**.