



The Pipe Organ

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
New Vernon, NJ

VOL. 61 NO. 5

May, 2012

“But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all of these things will be given to you as well.”
Matthew 6: 33

Rick's Reflections

I go to church about once a month. That's all I need. I attend worship when there is nothing else going on, as long as I feel like it. I think it's great that we have a youth program, but my kids are too busy to go. I'd like to serve on a committee, but I'm just too busy with important things.

Church as an afterthought: Is that who we are?

What do you strive for? This is the essential question of health for any church. It is not how many members there are on the rolls; it is not how busy the calendar is with activity. It's not how creative and excellent the worship experience is, nor is it the size of the budget. The primary indicator of health for this or any congregation is summed up in the verse from Matthew.

If most of the people in a church are striving FIRST for God's kingdom—that is, living out the gospel of Jesus Christ with a serious level of commitment—then that is a healthy church. Too often a church can show outward signs of health while suffering from a deadly lack of commitment.

This is not something that is easy to measure. And it is something that cannot be programmed or controlled by leadership. Commitment is a personal decision on the part of an individual to put Christ first in his or her life. When a critical mass of the membership makes that commitment, then the church becomes faithful and healthy. When most of the members of a church do not make that commitment, then that church is unhealthy.

I don't want us to evaluate our church on this scale. I want you to evaluate YOUR personal level of commitment to Christ and his church. You cannot control the health of the whole church beyond your

own level of commitment. If church is first in your life in order of importance, and in order of time and energy and resource usage, then you are doing all you can to make this a healthy church. If not...

In this edition of *The Pipe Organ*, you will find the Covenant of Membership that has been posted in Fellowship Hall and in the Narthex of the Sanctuary. It might be a good place to start in answering the question of how committed you are to this church.

I want this church to be healthy. I want this church to grow, not just in numbers, but in faithfulness and commitment. Jesus has promised that when he is first, then all of the rest of the needs in life will be met. That

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FPCNV Staff

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Senior Pastor
Margaret P. Gray,
Minister of Music
Richard Cox,
Minister of Music
Debbie Hennessey,
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Manager of Accounting*
Gordon T. Ward,
*Director of Youth and
Family Activities*
Susan H. Fischer,
Director of Sunday School
Bob Hicks,
Student Pastor
Tony Rodriguez,
Custodian

Elders

Jane Coyle, Clerk of Session
Nancy Barrett
Nancy Burrows
Tom Ewig
Bret Fischer
Kerra French
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Larry Malm
Brenda Myers
Mike Phillips

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Aimee Bloom, Moderator
Robyn Brown
Janet Bruns
Fenton Chaney
Lisa Chapman
Andrea Di Ruggiero
Sandy Finlayson
Barbara Gill
Nancy Gockley
Barbara Kephart
Denice Monaco
Sue Nobleman
Prudy Sweeney
Anne Thomas
Eileen Urban

is true for the church as well. Our worship and our education program and our outreach and our stewardship will all be healthy if each of us takes our own commitment to the church seriously.

Let it never again be an afterthought.

Pastor Rick

**GREETERS NEEDED**

To volunteer, please use the
sign-up sheet in
Fellowship Hall
or
contact:

Janet Bruns
973-267-5023

USHERS NEEDED

To volunteer,
please contact the
Session Member
of the month.

May:
Brenda Myers
973-267-2850

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Volunteer to be a Coffee Hour host.
Bring your favorite snacks and help make
this time of fellowship a pleasant one for all.

A Deacon will be available
to help you on Sunday morning.

Contact the Deacon of the Month:

May:
Denice Monaco
973-822-2276

**Thank You**

April Coffee Hour Hosts:

Special thanks go to Lisa Chapman, the Coy Family, Suzie Morris, the Noyes Family, and Sue Whitehouse for hosting Coffee Hour in April.



APRIL SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



The following are highlights from the April 17, 2012 Session Meeting.

The meeting began with Reverend Sweeney leading us in prayer.

Committee Highlights

Adult Education: May 6 Elder Mruttu from the Presbyterian Church in Nairobi will speak after worship. On May 27 join us at Coffee Hour for Bible Baseball!

Finance: Pledges are up but plate offerings are down. The Committee is looking into a toner cartridge recycling program at Staples that can earn the Church a little more money.

Membership: Pastor Rick and Gordon delivered 31 welcome baskets to new home owners. They were very well received. Eileen Urban is hosting a luncheon for church members who have joined since 2010. We are always on the lookout for potential new members.

Personnel Committee: No formal report.

Amanda Sukumoto has been hired as the new organist and will start in June. Maggie will help Amanda to make a smooth transition.

Worship and Music: The celebratory luncheon for Maggie and Bob on Sunday, April 15 was a great success. While we are sad to see Maggie leave and will greatly miss her musical talents, we are also looking forward to welcoming Amanda.

Youth Education: Session will meet with the Confirmands after worship on May 20 to hear their faith statements. Confirmation Sunday has been rescheduled for June 3.

Congregational Life: The Sheeleighs have generously offered the use of their home for the church picnic.

Mission & Outreach: The outreach process is currently being reorganized. The Committee is looking into including Habitat for Humanity once again.

Buildings & Grounds: The painting of 16 Lee's Hill Road is on the project list, as well as some smaller tasks that will be tended to by volunteers. Annual contracts will be reviewed.

Communion will be served on Sunday, May 6, 2012. The next Session meeting will be on Tuesday, May 22, 2012.

Reverend Sweeney adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Coyle – Clerk of Session



Out of the Deep

I recently heard from a friend of mine named Kelley who told me of a whale watch trip she took during a recent trip to Hawaii. If you've never been on a successful whale watch, it's something you need to do. If you have experienced the sighting of whales, then you know the unique feeling you get when you encounter these behemoths of our oceans.

Whales are wild. They're not trained. Sometimes they show up, and sometimes they don't, but they're always out there below the surface of the waves. On an average whale watch excursion, I would guess that people get to see a handful of these magnificent creatures, and some companies even guarantee sightings. Kelley was extremely fortunate on her trip. It ends up she went out with a non-profit research/preservation group, rather than a commercial company, and estimates their group must have seen 80-100 whales! In addition, her group saw at least ten, full, out-of-the-water breaches! Even the crew exclaimed that, on a scale of 1 to 10, this particular trip was a 27!

The crew members were actually scrambling for *their* cameras when this enormous Humpback whale started "playing" with Kelley's boat! Understand, the law requires that boats stay at least one hundred yards away from any whales. Problem is, no one told this whale! In cases where these gentle giants wander in nearby a boat, the crew is required to shut down the engines and wait for the whale to move on and away from the boat. On Kelley's trip, a huge (and she emphasizes HUGE) fellow surfaced about two feet from the side of the boat during the return trip. It then proceeded to go under the boat and come up on the other side and continue doing so, back-and-forth and back-and-forth, pleasantly holding the watchers "hostage" for at least an extra half hour with an absolutely amazing display!

Needless to say, Kelley arrived back in port a changed woman. There's something deep inside all of us that is touched when we experience communion with another creature, especially one that is so vast and unfamiliar. It affects the way we view our place in this world and our scope of the complexity of the world around us.

Do you know where I'm going with this? Sometimes we encounter God in a similar manner. We can hear of this immeasurable, indescribable, creator of the universe and be told he exists and loves us beyond what we could ever imagine. That's one way to know God. But... when he interjects himself into our lives in a visible manner, it floors us. We are awestruck, absolutely amazed, that such a vast God could actually have a personal interest in us. There are God-moments that occur in our own lives when we can truly sense God at work, right beside us. These moments, these experiences, are indescribable and fill us with a sensation of wonder.

God's in the close call you had where something out of the ordinary happened that saved you. God's in the eye-catching, spectacular sunset you see out of your car window on the highway heading home. God is in the voice of the doctor who calls with news of good test results. God is also there, working through the hands of the doctors who provide healing treatment. God is in the feeling you get when you help someone in need. God is in the peace you find in prayer. God is in the voice of a small child who looks up into your face, for no reason at all, and unexpectedly says, "I love you."

We may think we are far from God, but he's always out there, and he *will* show up in our lives. I guarantee it. I can't tell you when or where, but if you scan the horizons of your life, you'll see him. God shows up unexpectedly. He takes us by surprise. He rises out of the deep to personally touch our lives, making himself undeniably visible through his works. When these moments occur, we stop our engines, and we run for our cameras, even if it's only to take a snapshot that remains indelibly impressed on our memories.

In the midst of the waves of life, keep watch. God is out there. He has risen, and he will surface again, perhaps right beside you, out of the deep and into your heart.

FPCNV Book Club

May Book Selection and Schedule



The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein

The Art of Racing in the Rain has everything: love, tragedy, redemption, danger, and—best of all—the canine narrator, Enzo. This old soul of a dog has much to teach us about being human. I loved this book. – Sara Gruen, Author of Water for Elephants

I savored Garth Stein's The Art of Racing in the Rain for many reasons: a dog who speaks, the thrill of competitive racing, a heart-tugging storyline, and—best of all—the fact that it is a meditation on humility and hope in the face of despair. Since finishing this engagingly unique novel, I've found myself staring at my own dog, thinking, Hmm, I wonder ... – Wally Lamb, Author of She's Come Undone and I Know This Much Is True.

Meeting Dates and Book Selections

Where: Library

When: 7:30 pm

May 8 *The Art of Racing in the Rain*~Garth Stein

Jun 12 *A Perfect Spy* by John LeCarré

New members are welcome.

The Art of Racing in the Rain takes you on an unforgettable journey through another kind of mind, through the eyes, and nose, of a dog. I found it fascinating. – Temple Grandin, Author of Animals in Translation

New Vernon Presbyterian Nursery School News



New Vernon Presbyterian Nursery School (NVPNS) is now accepting enrollment for our 2½-, 3-, and 4-year-old classes for the 2012-2013 school year. NVPNS is a non-denominational, educational program that offers a warm and nurturing environment to help your child prepare for kindergarten. All classes start at 9:00 am and are 2½, 3½, or 4 hours in duration. Busy parents are supported through optional early morning drop-off, Stay 'n Play until 3pm, summer camp, and enrichment programs. Most importantly, both children and parents have fun!

Established in 1986, NVPNS is located in Fellowship Hall. Please call Director Laurie Ptalis at 973-326-9839 for a tour and visit their website at www.nvpns.org.

They look forward to hearing from you!

Adult Ed ~ May Events

SPECIAL GUEST FROM NAIROBI, KENYA: May 6

We will have the privilege of hosting an elder from the Presbytery of Nairobi, Kenya the week of May 2 through May 8. Elder Peter Mruttu will be with us helping to lead worship and in a question-and-answer Adult Education time after worship on May 6. Please help us make him feel welcome. Our Presbytery supports a partnership with Nairobi in ministries, such as health care and clean drinking water projects. Come and learn more about what your mission dollars are accomplishing in Africa.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME! May 27 (Please Note Date Change)

No, you won't need your glove or your bat, but please bring a spirit of fun as we play a Bible trivia game called "Bible Baseball." Everyone at the Coffee Hour will be on one of two teams. You may be called on to "bat up." You can choose a single for an easy question (What was Adam's wife's name?) or go for more difficult questions with a double, triple, or home run! (The home run question might be, "How will you know Adam in heaven?" Answer: "He will be the one without a belly button.") Fellowship Hall will be decked out in baseball décor. This should be a lot of fun. Don't worry if you don't know a lot of Bible trivia. Although steroids will not be tolerated, a little cheating will be.



Soles 4 Souls For Kentucky

Please help our youth group collect shoes for Lotts Creek, Kentucky by dropping off your new or gently-used, clean shoes in the collection boxes on the Fellowship Hall stage any time from April 15-May 13.

Pairs of shoes must be fastened together with rubber bands.

Thank you!



Donating Used Toner Cartridges

Office Administrator, Debbie Hennessey, is willing to do the footwork to recycle any printer toner cartridges that you drop off at Fellowship Hall. Staples will issue a store credit for \$2.00 for each toner cartridge that we bring in. This donation will help the environment, while defraying the expenses incurred to run the Church Office. You will also be given a "special gift" acknowledgement on your statements. This is a win-win opportunity all the way around.

Congregational Life News

From The Congregational Life Committee:

Old-Fashioned Church Picnic Sunday, June 10~Save the Date!

The Sheeleigh Family has agreed to host this year's church picnic on June 10th. Thank you, Kathy and Matt!

We will again be serving the ever-popular strawberry shortcake thanks to Barbara Gill.

The picnic is a perfect opportunity for the congregation to enjoy fun and fellowship at the end of the school year and to kick off the summer!



The Membership Committee has created a new poster to hang in Fellowship Hall (see below). It reminds us of the relationship between us as individual members and the church as an institution. We are each responsible for ourselves and for the church. Everyone should practice these commitments to ensure that our church remains a vibrant place in which to worship. Take a look...

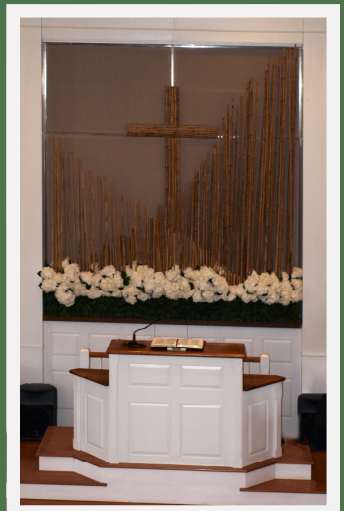
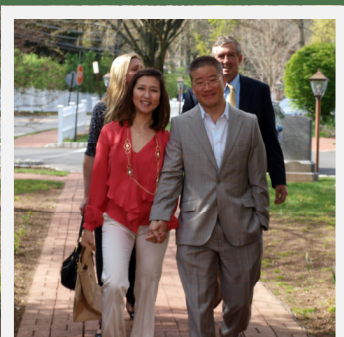
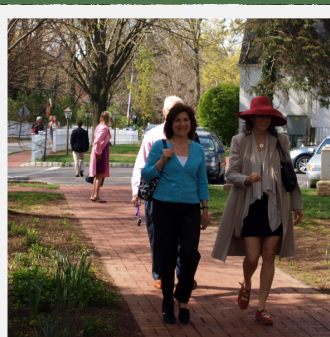
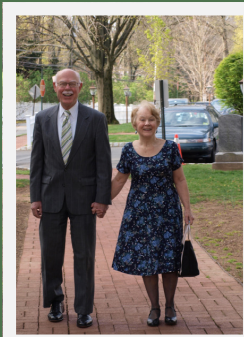


Covenant of Membership

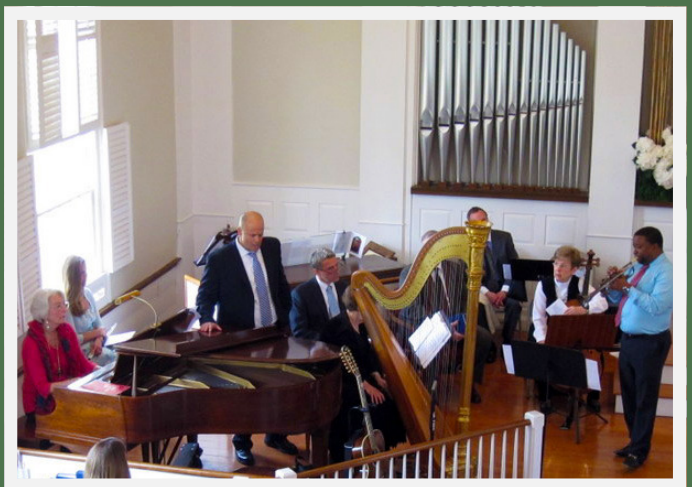
Trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and being a member of the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon, I commit myself to strive toward the following goals:

- Regular participation in the corporate worship and the sacraments.
- A daily private discipline of the personal spiritual growth grounded in scripture.
- Integration of faith into daily life.
- Participation in some group, role or task in the life and mission of the church.
- Financial stewardship to support the life and mission of the church.
- Sharing in the fellowship, support, and caring of others in this expression of the body of Christ.

Sunday, May 15 ~ Shalom, Good Friends



The Sanctuary was adorned in love and beauty.



Friends gathered, old and new...

The Sanctuary was filled with the music of flute, harp, cello, trumpets, guitar, piano, pipe organ, and jubilant voice as we gathered in worship together...

Maggie & Bob Gray's Celebration



Great fellowship, food, and music...



*The Lord watch between me and
thee, while we are absent one from
another.*

Genesis 31:49



A Letter from Maggie & Bob Gray

Maggie and Bob wish to thank the choir, deacons, church family, instrumentalists, session, and staff for the wonderful celebration held on Sunday, April 15th, 2012.

As one entered the sanctuary the creative design of a cross and rank of pipes made of bamboo with hydrangea placed at the base was spiritually inspiring. A special bulletin cover was chosen and beautiful music was played and sung. Having long-established and new musicians participate was thrilling and uplifting. The service was filled with an aura of joy, love, and fulfillment.

The delicious lunch that followed allowed for more time to visit and share fond memories with friends.

We are especially grateful for all of the gifts..... the fabulous and personalized book of church photos, two framed pictures of our Mt. Kemble home and of the church on Christmas Eve 2008, and another jeweled frame to be used in the future. In addition, there were vases of roses and tulips and a generous check which will help defray moving costs as well as our 50th anniversary celebration on Oahu with our immediate family. The audio and video copies of the service will be a treasure and remind us of this special day, one of the happiest in Maggie's life.

Shalom, Good Friends

It is with great sadness that we say good-bye to Bob and Maggie Gray. They will be moving to California to be closer to their two daughters and their grandchildren.

Maggie has been playing the organ at our church for 50 years. There is no way to count the immeasurable contribution she has made toward making this a special place to worship. Bob has been a devoted choir member and volunteer in many aspects of our church's life. His contribution will also be sorely missed.



WE wish them all the best in the years ahead and pray God's richest blessings upon them. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU, Maggie and Bob!

SAY IT WITH FLOWERS...TWICE!

The congregation enjoys the flowers on the altar each Sunday, and your gifts enhance the beauty of our lovely church. In addition, the acknowledgement in the weekly program allows others to share in your memorial or celebration dedication.

BUT, THERE IS MORE...

Did you know that after the service, Deacons deliver the flowers to people in our church family?



Pastor Rick advises the Deacons regarding recipients. Then, two Deacons are assigned this task on a monthly basis. Engaging in this traditional mission, the Deacons combine flower delivery with a friendly visit and a copy of the Sunday bulletin.

For further information and/or to sign up for a Sunday floral contribution:

Call or email Bernice Paton at
973-539-5168 or bnice234@comcast.net



Greg Van Kirk Receives Award

Greg Van Kirk was awarded the Social Entrepreneur of the Year for Latin America by the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship. This award was given as recognition for the Community Enterprise Solutions team's pioneering work in the design, implementation and scaling of the MicroConsignment Model. This honor further acknowledges the MicroConsignment Model as an essential tool in the fight against global poverty.

“Needless to say, it is an incredible honor for us to be receiving this type of recognition for our efforts. It is a true blessing to be able to represent Bucky, our leadership team, and all of the amazing and passionate people who have contributed so much and worked so incredibly hard over these past years to help those less fortunate than themselves. But let this be more about empowering our future efforts than about celebrating our past accomplishments. To paraphrase from the great Nelson Mandela, ‘When the water starts boiling, it is foolish to turn off the heat.’ Our work has only just started. Let this serve as inspiration for all of our team and supporters to redouble our efforts to help an exponential number of individuals and families escape from the vicious cycle of poverty in the years to come. Adelante!” - Greg Van Kirk



Min Kwon & The International Rising Stars Recital Was Superb!

LEFT: Di-Yi Tang, Alexander Beridze, Lauren Lee, Min Kwon, Zin Bang, & Robert Grohman

BELOW: Robert Grohman, Erickson Rojas, Min Kwon & Zin Bang

On Saturday, April 28, member Min Kwon brought five of her Doctoral students who treated us to a splendid concert. Those in attendance enjoyed a sampling of Brahms, Chopin, Beethoven, Liszt, Debussy, Rachmaninov, Piazzollo, and the classic hymn, *Beneath The Cross of Jesus* arranged by Samuel Hsu. We continue to receive raves about the amazing talent we were privileged to hear.



Baptism

Willem Hanfei Thomas

Sunday, April 1, 2012

Willem Hanfei Thomas, son of Gina and Philip Thomas, grandson of Anne and John Thomas, was baptized on Palm Sunday.

We warmly welcome Willem into the community of faith.



Betty Ann Jackson Ryan

April 12, 2012

Betty Anne Jackson Ryan, mother of our member, Anne LaPré, passed away on Thursday, April 12, 2012, just three days short of her 86th birthday.

Please keep Anne and her family in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

If you would like to send a card or a note to Anne:

Anne LaPré
16 White Oak Ridge Court
Mendham, NJ 07945

Herbert E. Gernert

August 11, 1925-April 16, 2012



Our dear friend, Herb Gernert, passed away on Monday, April 16 after a brief illness. He will be greatly missed by his church family.

Please keep Sally and her family in your thoughts and your prayers.

If you would like to send a card or a note to Sally:

Sally Gernert
4112 Fellowship Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

May 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Youth Group Dinner & Cookie Baking 6:00-8 pm	3 Bible Study 9-10 am Choir 7:30 pm	4 AA Meeting noon	5
6 COMMUNION Confirmation Class to LCPC 9:30-11:30 am Adult Ed: Nairobi Guest in the Library at Coffee Hour DEACONS' BAKE SALE	7 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am	8 Book Club 7:30 p Library	9	10 Bible Study 9-10 am Choir 7:30 pm	11 AA Meeting noon <div>Confirmation Retreat Fri 5pm—Sat 4pm</div>	12
13 7th Grade Pre- Confirmation Class 9:00-9:30 am Baptism Happy Mother's Day! Special gifts. YES: Hiking 12-2 pm	14 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am Finance Committee Meeting 7 pm Deacons 7:30 pm	15	16 Youth Group Dinner, & Event TBA 6:00-8:00 pm	17 Bible Study 9-10 am NVGC 9:30-12 Choir 7:30 pm	18 AA Meeting noon	19
20 Youth Service	21 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am Madison Garden Club 11-3 pm	22	23	24 Bible Study 9-10 am Choir 7:30 pm	25 AA Meeting noon	26
27 BIBLE BASEBALL	28 No Bible Study CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY	29	30	31 Bible Study 9-10 am Choir 7:30 pm		

May Worship at FPCNV, 2012

Sunday, May 6

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Communion

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: Bob Hicks

Sermon: *Unless Someone Guides Me*

Text:

Psalm 22:25-31

Acts 8:26-40

Sunday, May 13

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: Bob Hicks

Sermon: *What Are You Looking At?*

Text:

Ephesians 1:15-23

Acts 1:1-11

Sunday, May 20

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Youth Sunday

Confirmation Ceremony

Sunday, May 27

Day of Pentecost

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *Weak Pentecostals*

Text:

Acts 2:1-4, 14-18

Romans 8:22-27

The Pipe Organ

First Presbyterian Church
2 Lee's Hill Road, PO Box 218
New Vernon, NJ 07976-0218

DEACONS' BAKE SALE

SUNDAY, MAY 6 AT COFFEE HOUR

The Deacons will once again provide the treats for this bake sale fundraiser during Coffee Hour.



MAY HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, May 6

Special Guest from Nairobi, Kenya Ministry
DEACONS' BAKE SALE

Friday & Saturday, May 11-12

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Sunday, May 13

Baptism

Mother's Day Gifts

Sunday, May 20

Youth Service

Sunday, May 27

BIBLE BASEBALL!

E-mail Addresses

The Church Office is still collecting and correcting members' e-mail addresses. If you would like to be included in various e-mail mailings, please e-mail office@pcnv.org or call 973-538-8394.

CHURCH OFFICE

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