

# The Pipe Organ

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
New Vernon, NJ

VOL. 61 NO. 1

January, 2012

*"For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busy bodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly."*

## Rick's Reflections

~ II Thessalonians 3:11-12

In the past few months we have thought about the various areas of work in our church and the Session committees that lead us in that work. But there are other groups behind the scenes that work quietly to make the rest of this work possible. The Finance Committee works hard to manage the Church's monetary issues. They monitor the offerings and pay the bills. The Administration Committee takes care of such issues as insurance and office equipment and management. The Buildings and Grounds Committee is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the four buildings of the church and the grounds surrounding them.

All of these groups do their work quietly and behind the scenes. They make it possible for all of the good work that is done to take place. Without them, there would be no worship or missions or programs or activities. They are the ones who equip the Church to be obedient to the call of Christ to be a witness to Christ in the world around us. We should stop and give thanks for the dedicated groups that equip us for ministry together. They are also answering the call of Christ.

They work so often in anonymity. They do not seek the praise of others. They seek only to serve so that the church can be the church. But they do their work. What about you? What is your job in the Church? You might be one who is hard at work in some area of the life of the Church. If so, you should know how much your church appreciates your effort. If you are not, you may think you don't have a job to do in the Church. But you would be wrong in thinking that. Volunteerism in the church is crucial for the health of a congregation. We need more than the 20% that try to do 80% of the work. We

need everybody. If you do not have a job in the Church, let's talk. I think we will be able to find a place where you can use your talents to serve the greater good.

At this writing, I am preparing the funeral service for Susan Groel. She was serving as an active deacon at the time of her death. You may not have known that it was she, but if you ever got a card from the Deacons when you were sick or grieving, it was Susan who wrote that card. I hope we all can honor her

*Continued page 2*

### What's Inside:

Harvard Professor Sandel's <i>Justice</i> .....	2
Session Highlights .....	3
Gordon's Corner .....	4
Monday Bible Study .....	5
Youth Yoga.....	5
Nursery School Registration .....	5
Christmas Pageant & Christmas Eve .	6-7
Book Club News .....	8
Stewardship Message .....	8
Invitation to Musicians .....	9
Adult Ed in January & February .....	9
Outreach Focus-Homeless Solutions .	10
November 20 pictures .....	11
January Movie Night.....	12
Musical Notes .....	12
Other December Highlights.....	13
Naked Spirituality Series.....	13
January Calendar.....	14
January Worship Plans .....	15

**FPCNV Staff**

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Gordon T. Ward,  
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Janet Bruns  
Fenton Chaney  
Jane Coyle  
Andrea Di Ruggiero  
Sandy Finlayson  
Barbara Gill  
Nancy Gockley  
Barbara Kephart  
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Denice Monaco  
Sue Nobleman  
Judith Shelton  
Prudy Sweeney

memory by taking on some task that will make this a more faithful church. The new year is a great time to begin something new. I urge you prayerfully to consider just one way you can serve the Church and let me know. If you wish, we will keep it quiet.

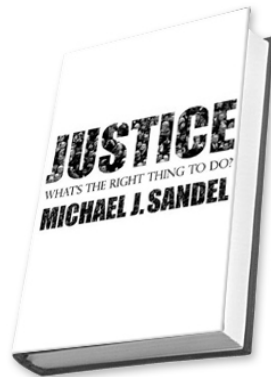
Peace,

*Pastor Rick*

## Justice

### What Is the Right Thing To Do?

#### New Series coming in February



In February, we will begin a new series on ethics, based on Harvard Professor Michael Sandel's course, *Justice*. In a trailblazing partnership with WGBH, a non-commercial educational public television station in Boston, Harvard has opened its classroom to the world. Professor Sandel's course aims to help viewers become more critically minded thinkers about the moral decisions we all face in our everyday lives.

*"For Michael Sandel, justice is not a spectator sport," The Nation's reviewer of Justice remarked. In his acclaimed book—based on his legendary Harvard course—Sandel offers a rare education in thinking through the complicated issues and controversies we face in public life today. It has emerged as a most lucid and engaging guide for those who yearn for a more robust and thoughtful public discourse. "In terms we can all understand," wrote Jonathan Rauch in The New York Times, Justice "confronts us with the concepts that lurk . . . beneath our conflicts."*

*Sandel relates the big questions of political philosophy to the most vexing issues of the day. He shows how a surer grasp of philosophy can help us make sense of politics, morality, and our own convictions as well.*



*More information will be available in the next issue of The Pipe Organ.*



## DECEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



**The following are highlights from the December 20, 2011 Session meeting.**

The meeting began with John Thomas leading devotions on the symbolism that early 15th century Catholics applied to the Yule song, "Partridge in a Pear Tree."

### **Committee Highlights**

#### **Congregational Life**

The Congregational Life Committee is looking to enroll new members.

#### **Finance**

The Finance Committee reported that NVPC's plate offerings continue to be down and expenses for Buildings & Grounds are up. The Presbytery is raising Membership dues by .75% and will allow staff salary increases of 1.5%.

#### **Stewardship**

Roughly one-half of our congregation membership has made a pledge to meet our 2012 budget. While we are getting closer to our goal, we could easily surpass it if more would offer what they are able.

#### **Buildings and Grounds**

The architect has begun the evaluation of the work to be done for the sanctuary window restoration in 2012. Some critical safety code items have also been uncovered in the building.

**Seating capacity in the balcony is limited to 44 people. Ushers will monitor to ensure capacity is not exceeded.**

#### **Mission and Outreach**

Mission and Outreach has announced that the Christmas offerings will be equally distributed among the organizations we support.

#### **Nominating**

Newly appointed Elders and Deacons will be ordained on January 22, 2012.

#### **Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee is beginning the staff evaluation process. Additionally, backfills are being sought for organist and for overseer of our Memorial Garden. Maggie and Bob Gray have long served our church community with grace and steadfastness and will leave a lasting mark in this place and in our hearts.

**A Congregational Meeting to receive the 2011 Annual Report and 2012 Budget will follow Sunday Service on February 5, 2012.**

**Communion will be served on Sunday, January 8, 2012. Next Session meeting: Tuesday, January 17, 2012.**

Pastor Rick adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jane Asdal, Clerk of Session



## Thank God!

Well, December 25th has come and gone, and I, for one, say, “Thank God!” for more than one reason. Let me tell you a story. When my children were in elementary school, their Christmas concert always ended with the song “Christmas Is a Feeling,” written by Natalie Sleeth. Take a look at the lyrics.

*For Christmas is a feeling filling the air. / It's love and joy and laughter of people everywhere. / But if Christmas is a feeling bringing such good cheer, / Then why oh why don't you and I / Try to make it last all year? / Why can't it last all year?*

Every time I hear this song, I have the same thought. Really? Last all year? Mankind puts up a poor struggle just to make the spirit of Christmas last one night... or maybe one morning of opening gifts, and then it's back to the usual.

Did any of you encounter any Christmas-related activity that went awry? I saw people getting into arguments about parking spaces. I witnessed two men almost come to blows while in the checkout line in the grocery store. I heard a person say, “There's a certain amount of money I have to spend on you.” A couple of individuals were overheard saying they didn't see a reason to celebrate something that would be over in a few weeks. Others referred to Christmas as the day when the calendar dictates that we buy things for other people. I heard that shoppers rioted to get bath towels for \$1.88 and waffle irons for \$2.00, and 20 people were injured after a woman at a Wal-Mart used pepper spray to get an edge on other shoppers in a rush for Xbox game consoles. Then there's the increasingly pervasive, expletive-ridden language of other shoppers, which mimics those reality television shows where every third word seems to be bleeped out of the audio track. Ughh!

Charlie Brown asked in 1965, “Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?” Ironically, the Grinch realized one year later that, “It came without ribbons! It came without tags! It came without packages, boxes, or bags!” and, “Maybe Christmas, he thought... doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps... means a little bit more!”

We keep throwing money at Christmas, as if it were going to satisfy us. We keep trying to make our Christmases perfect – the perfect tree, the perfect gifts, the perfect meal. Hello! The perfect celebration never happened, and it's never going to happen. The perfect Christmas only happened once. Jesus was born and came to this earth because we are **imperfect**! Mankind hasn't a clue how to do perfection, and it certainly isn't found in bath towels, waffle irons, or Xbox games. Instead, we need to focus on our charge – the responsibility to care for each other and to love one another – and that's hard. It's difficult because it demands that we change our thinking, expectations, actions, and reactions.

One of my favorite things to do at Christmas is taking a walk outside at night to gaze at the stars and the moon, thinking they're the same ones Mary and Joseph saw on that first Christmas. It fills me with peace coupled with a sense of accountability, the way I think Joseph and Mary felt. I'm sure they would have preferred to settle down, but Herod was a threat to them. They realized they had to be on the move, to escape, in order to save the life of their child. They had to completely change their plans and go far out of their way in order that their child could survive, grow, mature, and reinvent eternity.

You see, if Christmas has any chance of lasting all year, it needs to start with our transformation. No one can do it for us. The church can't do it for us. God won't even do it for us. We, as individuals, have to decide to take God up on his offer, to make a move and realize that we hold the hope for this world in our hearts, much like Joseph and Mary held it in their arms. We need to decide to go out of our way to give love a chance to grow and mature. We have to change our thinking and plans. We have to change the way we respond to this world. If we do, God promises to work wonders through us.

So, yes, thank God that Christmas is not about one night of carols or one day or any one present or any one meal or any amount of shopping. Christmas is about love, it's a way of life, it's ongoing, and it's about seeing Emmanuel in the eyes of everyone you meet... every day.



# Monday Women's Bible Study

## New Year ~ New Study

All are welcome to join the Monday Women's Bible Study group as we begin a new study on the five women named in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. Come explore the unique and slightly scandalous stories of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary—women of faith and ancestors of our Lord.

Classes resume on Monday, January 9 at 9:30 to 11 am.

Contact June Tamburro for more information:

gtamburrow@aol.com



# Youth Yoga

## Middle School and High School Students



**Sunday Afternoons**

**1:00 –2:15 pm**

**Beginning on January 8**

Bring a Mat

Instructor—MJ Turnbull

\$10 suggested donation

# New Vernon Presbyterian Nursery School

is now accepting enrollment for January Admission to their 2½-year-old-class. They are a nondenominational educational program that offers a warm and nurturing environment that helps your child prepare for kindergarten. The Nursery School supports busy parents with optional early morning drop-off, Stay 'N Play until 3 pm, Summer Camp, and enrichment programs. Most importantly, their kids and parents have fun!



The Nursery School is also accepting enrollment for our 2½-3- and 4-year-old classes for the 2012-2013 school year. Established in 1985, the Nursery School is located in the Fellowship Building of the New Vernon Presbyterian Church at the crossroads of Village and Lee's Hill Roads. Please call their Director, Laurie Ptalis, at 973-326-9839 for a tour and visit their website at [www.nvpns.org](http://www.nvpns.org).

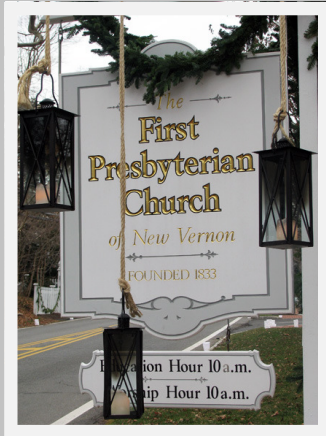
# Children's Christmas Pageant 2011



Our Director of Sunday School, Susan Fischer, guided our children in a performance of *Good News of Great Joy* on December 11.



# Christmas Eve 2011



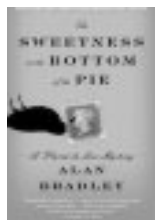
David Mitchell of Still Life decorated the grounds with hanging lanterns and the Sanctuary with winter berry branches for Christmas Eve. Andrea and Matt DiRuggiero prepared the luminaria, and Matt, Eileen McDonald, and Gordon Ward placed them by the walkways and the curbs.

— Images submitted by Gordon Ward.



# FPCNV Book Club

## December Meeting, Meeting Dates, and Book Selections



### January: *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* by Alan Bradley

Told through the observations of a science-experimenting snoop of an 11-year-old girl, this jolly-good-fun murder mystery is as indulgent as a Bunty annual. Flavia de Luce,

daughter to a philatelist colonel father and late mother, who died when she was a baby, finds a body in the cucumber patch. In the twists and turns that ensue, centering around the nesting habits of the snipe and the last word of the dead man, she proves herself as indomitable a sleuth as you would expect a girl who says "Oh, piffle" to be.

—Good Housekeeping, UK

In June 1950's, very-nearly-eleven-year-old Flavia de Luce, rising above the torments of her two older sisters and plotting revenge in her Victorian chemistry lab, is intrigued by the mystery of a snipe with a rare stamp in its beak, found on the doorstep of the crumbling de Luce country seat. And she is astonished by the effect the dead bird has on her stamp-obsessed father, the Colonel. When something much worse is found in the cucumber patch

### Meeting Dates and Book Selections

Where: Library When: 7:30 pm

Jan 10	<i>The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie</i> by Alan Bradley
Feb 14	<i>The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character and Achievement</i> by David Brooks
Mar 13	<i>Years of Wonders</i> by Geraldine Brooks
Apr 10	<i>A Perfect Spy</i> by John LeCarré
May 8	<i>The Art of Racing in the Rain</i> by Garth Stein
Jun 12	<i>The Empire of the Summer Moon</i> by S.C. Gwynn

**New members are welcome.**

and family secrets begin to unravel, Flavia has to use all her deductive powers to solve a mystery and a crime. At once precocious and endearing, Flavia is a marvelous character. Quirkily appealing, this is definitely a crime novel with a difference."

—Choice Magazine, "Book of the Month."

### Message from Stewardship

We would like to remind you that, if you have not fulfilled your pledge for calendar year 2011, we are extending the deadline to Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> to be counted for 2011. Please specify "2011 pledge balance" on your contribution, or it will be counted toward 2012. If you need to know your 2011 pledge balance, please call Darlene Noetzli at the Church Office : 973-538-8394 extension 15.

The pledge period for the 2012 Stewardship Campaign "**We're on a Roll!**" has come to a close. We thank those of you who have made a pledge for the coming year. If you have not made a pledge, please do so at this time before the 2012 budget is finalized. Your support is needed now to help keep our Church "On a Roll!" in 2012.

Tom MacCowatt, Stewardship Chair





## All People Come and Play!

We are looking for people to come and play for the Church. Whether you are young or older, we invite you to share your talents with us.

Sign up to help us celebrate with musical instruments in Worship. This requires limited time commitments only.

Call Richard to join or with questions.

908-684-0995



## ADULT EDUCATION

### JANUARY

**Jan 8** Nooma Film

**Jan 29** Betsy Hall will offer a presentation on Homeless Solutions.

### FEBRUARY

**Feb 5** Harvard Professor Michael Sandal's DVD "Justice: What is the right thing to do?" will be the basis of group discussion (see pg 2).

**Feb 19** Bob Hicks presentation. Look for details in February Pipe Organ.

**TBA** Pastor Rick will begin a four-part series based Brian McLaren's book, *Naked Spirituality*, about four stages of Spiritual Development.

# January Outreach Focus

## Homeless Solutions



In 1983, religious and business leaders looked out from their buildings and saw people who had no home. They decided that, in their community, all people would have shelter from the cold and food for the day. In May 1983, Morris Shelter, Inc. was created as a private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization.

In the beginning, the Shelter provided beds and meals to men in the Manse of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown. In 1985, Morris Shelter, Inc. opened a shelter at the old Morris View Nursing Home facility. This facility provided 45 beds, meals, clothing, and supportive services for men, women, and children. In 1994, the Shelter Program expanded to a second floor after renovations took place. A Head Start Childcare Program and counseling services were added. In 1995, educational services through the GED/Adult Basic course and a Life Skills Course were offered on site.

In 1995, the Safe Haven Program was also started to serve the mentally ill homeless who were living on the streets. In 1996, the Family Transitional Housing facility was completed and is now serving ten families. Case management services and referral services are offered to residents to help them meet employment and income goals and acquire life skills and savings goals for

placement into independent housing.

As the nineties progressed, the lack of affordable housing emerged as a critical gap in service to the working poor. Families ready to leave the Shelter weren't able to find low-income apartments, thus prolonging their stay and limiting access to other families in need. In 1999, the Shelter expanded its mission to include the development of affordable housing for working poor families.

This new vision led to a new name: Homeless Solutions, Inc. The goal is to increase the supply of affordable housing through construction, renovation, and advocacy for low-and-moderate-income people.

Today, Homeless Solutions, Inc. provides shelter for 25 homeless men, 10 homeless women, 19 families and 20 Safe Haven guests.

Their guests receive services including case management, transportation to work and necessary appointments, money management and employment assistance, housing search assistance, and daily living skills training. Referral services for counseling, substance abuse intervention and prevention are also provided.



### The Reverend Dr. Elizabeth S. Hall to Speak at PCNV on January 29

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth S. Hall joined Homeless Solutions, Inc. as its Executive Director in September 1998. Dr. Hall is an ordained Presbyterian Minister. Her Master of Divinity degree is from Drew University, and she holds a Doctor of Ministry from Columbia Seminary. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Housing and Community Development Network of NJ and Kirkridge Retreat Center of Pennsylvania.

As President/CEO of Homeless Solutions, Inc., Betsey directs the largest shelter in the Morris County area. HSI, a developer of affordable housing in Morris County, currently owns and manages 57 units of supportive family housing, and will complete an additional 8 apartments by the end of 2012. In 2006, Betsey received the Community Foundation of NJ's Exemplary Performance in Nonprofit Management Award. In 2007, she received the Abigail Allen Women's Leadership Award from Alfred University.

### Topic Summary

The housing market has collapsed. Downstream of that market, the pressure on the shelter system is increasing. Betsey will talk with us about the big picture for those who become homeless, the current housing situation in NJ, and the role that Homeless Solutions, Inc. plays in this picture. The basic necessity of a safe, affordable place to live will affect the economy as well as the individuals and families caught in the cross fire. What can you, the church, and our leaders do to influence the conversation?



# Cinnamon Toast Sticks, The Deacons' Bake Sale & Church Ornament Fundraiser



November 20 was a busy Sunday at the crossroads: Anne and John Thomas; Kerra, Jeff, Aaron, and Noah French; and Andrea and Lauren Di Ruggiero and Lauren's college friend prepared The Thomases' famous Cinnamon Toast Sticks for Coffee Hour. The Deacons hosted a bake sale to raise money for the Community Soup Kitchen; and that's Jack Myers selling etched brass ornaments of our historic Sanctuary. — Photos submitted by Andrea and Lauren Di Ruggiero



## January Movie Night

**Wednesday, January 18  
7 pm at the Chaney's'**

### **AMAZING GRACE (2006) PG**

Based on actual events, this historical drama tells the story of William Wilberforce, an 18th-century English politician who launched an aggressive campaign to abolish British slavery.

Several of his friends, including Wilberforce's minister, a reformed slave ship captain who penned the beloved hymn Amazing Grace, urge him to see the cause through in spite of staunch opposition.

### **Emotional and Inspirational**

## Please Join Us

### **Adult Mixed Choir**

Rehearsals for the Adult Mixed Choir continue to meet on Thursdays at 7:30 pm. The choir is open to all adults and high school students who enjoy singing.



This Mixed Choir sings three to four Sundays per month and on such special occasions as Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday. The repertoire includes anthems from many periods and styles as well as psalm settings, hymns, and service music. Participants enjoy learning and singing together, being spiritually enriched through music and the camaraderie of friends.

Please join us for the year or for the season. If you are interested, call Richard Cox at 908-684-0995 or come to a rehearsal and see for yourself.

### **Children's Choir**



Are your children between the ages of 5 and 13? We would love to add their voices to our Children's Choir!

We will sing one Sunday a month and rehearse on Thursday afternoon or Sunday after worship, whichever works better for the most people.

We want to include your children in our worship service and look forward to hearing from you soon. Richard: 908-684-0995



## Other December Highlights

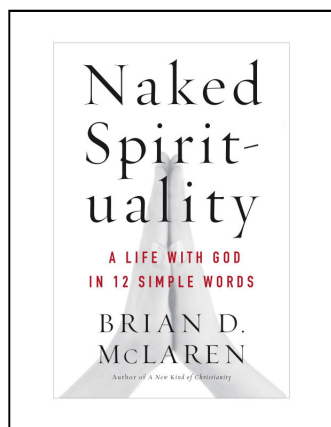


On December 11, seven new members joined our church: Min Kwon and Leonard Lee, Bob Mims, Kathy and Matt Sheeleigh, and Rene and John Williams. Look for more information about our new members in the February Issue of *The Pipe Organ*.



On Christmas morning, Natalie Best's mother, Helene Holland, and granddaughter, Ella McCauley, played the piano during the informal worship service. Above, all three generations of Natalie's family are pictured around the piano in the sanctuary.

## Naked Spirituality Four-Part Series

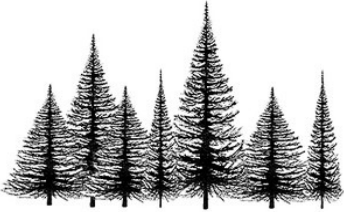


In late February (date to be confirmed in February *Pipe Organ*), Pastor Rick will be leading a four-part series based on Brian D. McLaren's book, *Naked Spirituality*.

From the book's dust jacket: *Christianity is in crisis. Many sincere Christians feel their traditional Christian practices are in danger of becoming irrelevant, empty rituals. In his previous book A New Kind of Christianity, McLaren offered new biblical models for how we understand the central ideas of a faith that provides hope for restoring and reinvigorating the power of the gospels to transform us and our communities.*

*In Naked Spirituality, McLaren...confront[s] how the lack of a simple doable, durable spirituality undermines the very transformation God is calling us to undergo. As a result, our religious structures become tools to maintain the status quo and not catalysts for personal and social change. McLaren presents a four-stage framework for understanding the spiritual life, and he unfolds spiritual practices appropriate to each stage. Each practice is rooted in a simple word: "here, thanks, O, sorry, help, please, when, no, why, behold, yes, and silence." Naked Spirituality offers accessible, practical wisdom for living a truly spiritual life. Staying true to Jesus' core message while engaging faithfully with our postmodern world, McLaren presents a proven spiritual program for engaging in and sustaining a meaningful relationship with God.*

# January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 10 am Worship	<b>2</b> Church Office Closed No Bible Study	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Youth Group Cookie Baking 6:30-8 pm	<b>5</b> <i>Old Testament            Bible Study</i> 9-10 am Choir 7:30 pm	<b>6</b> AA Meeting noon	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>Communion</b> 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee Hour 11:15 am Nooma Film "Sunday" in Library 1 pm Youth Yoga	<b>9</b> <b>Women's            Bible Study</b> 9:30-11 am  <b>Deacons Meeting</b> 7 pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <i>Old Testament            Bible Study</i> 9-10 am  Choir 7:30 pm	<b>13</b> AA Meeting noon	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 8:45 am Confirmation Class  10 am Worship  11 am Coffee Hour	<b>16</b> <b>Women's            Bible Study</b> 9:30-11 am  <b>Finance Com. Mtg</b> 7 pm	<b>17</b> Session Mtg 7 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <i>Old Testament            Bible Study</i> 9-10 am  Choir 7:30 pm	<b>20</b> AA Meeting noon	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10 am Worship Ordination of Elders and Deacons  11 am Coffee Hour	<b>23</b> <b>Women's            Bible Study</b> 9:30-11 am	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <i>Old Testament            Bible Study</i> 9-10 am  Choir 7:30 pm	<b>27</b> AA Meeting noon	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 8:45 am Confirmation Class 10 am Youth Sunday Service 11 am Coffee Hour 11:15 am Betsy Hall Homeless Solutions Presentation	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		<i>Old Testament            Bible Study</i> 9-10 am  Choir 7:30 pm	AA Meeting noon	
						



# January Worship at FPCNV, 2012

## Sunday, January 1

First Sunday after Christmas

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Sermon: *Growth Marks*

Text:

*Psalms 148*

*Luke 2:22-40*

## Sunday, January 8

Baptism of the Lord

Communion

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: Bradley Harris

Sermon: *The Ongoing Baptism*

Text:

*Mark 1:4-11*

*Acts 19:1-7*

## Sunday, January 15

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *The Philip Club*

Text:

*Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18*

*John 1:43-51*

## Sunday, January 22

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *Getting Our Story Straight*

Text:

*Luke 15: 1-24*

*Luke 15: 25-32*

## Sunday, January 29

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Youth Sunday Service

## **The Pipe Organ**

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

### **JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS**

#### **January 8**

Nooma Film: "Sunday"

#### **January 22**

Ordination of Elders and Deacons

#### **January 29**

Youth Sunday Service  
Betsy Hall Presentation on  
Homeless Solutions



### **E-mail Addresses**

The Church Office is still collecting and correcting e-mail addresses from our members. If you would like to be included in various e-mail mailings, please e-mail [Office@pcnv.org](mailto:Office@pcnv.org) or call 973-538-8394.

## **CHURCH OFFICE**

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEW VERNON, NEW JERSEY 07976

Phone: 973-538-8394  
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