

The Pipe Organ

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
New Vernon, NJ

VOL. 61 NO. 4

March, 2013

Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where O death is your victory?
I Corinthians 15:55

Rick's Reflections

Easter is more an experience than a holiday. The holiday never really matches the excitement of Christmas. Maybe that is as it should be. It's not that the event that we remember at Easter is not important. If there is no Easter, then Christmas means nothing. It's just that Easter is so much more significant than something that happened a long time ago. Easter is something that is to be experienced.

Jesus was dead. He wasn't pretending or in a coma. He was really dead. That should have been the end of him. But it wasn't the end of him. It was the beginning of us; the beginning of faith. Now this risen Christ seeks to share the experience of Easter with his church and his people.

DEATH

Jesus was dead and then he was alive. When my father died, I was more convinced than ever that in faith we never really die. Life has taken over and death, though painful to me, had lost its victory. He lives on in the care of the savior he loved.

DESPAIR

If you have ever felt like just giving up, then you know what despair feels like. But when you are reassured that there is hope for better things to come, you know the power of resurrection. It's then that Easter is a real experience for you.

WEAKNESS

When "I can't" becomes "God can," you know

that the Spirit of the risen Christ can do great things through you and your faith. Easter is the experience of new vitality that opens doors of possibility that you never had before.

SADNESS

Mary sat broken-hearted at the tomb. But Jesus spoke her name and she was filled with the great joy of life. That happens to us, sometimes when we have given up hope that we will ever feel joy again.

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APATHY

Easter is the experience of caring enough to work at making your life and the lives of others better. Easter is the experience of love that generates caring actions.

So you see, Easter is not just something that happened long ago. And it is certainly not bunnies and chocolate eggs. It is what we experience in this life when the living Christ becomes our welcomed guest in all things. Death and all of its cousins are left powerless. This is the Easter that God wants us to experience first-hand. HAPPY EASTER!

Pastor Rick

**What Is A Presbytery?**

The members of our church are part of something larger than just New Vernon Presbyterian. The word Presbyterian is a New Testament word meaning Elder. We are a group of believers governed by elders.

But we are not alone. There are other Presbyterian churches in our area. Together we are called Newton Presbytery. The Presbytery is not a "THEM." It's an "US." We are the Presbytery. Several times during the year representatives of all the Presbyterian congregations in our area gather for a meeting of the Presbytery. There are an equal number of ministers, (now called teaching elders) and ruling elders who have been elected from each congregation.

The Presbytery does its work through committees. Each committee is staffed by ministers and ruling elders from various churches. Together they work to support the local churches in various ways. The Presbytery also employs a small staff to support the work of the Presbytery.

I am glad that we are a connectional church. We help support and are supported by our sister churches that with us, make up the Newton Presbytery. Let us give thanks and remember to pray for the work of the Presbytery. That's us!



FEBRUARY SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



The following are highlights from the February 19, 2013 Session Meeting.

The meeting began with Pastor Rick Sweeney reading devotions.

Committee Highlights

Adult Education: Barbara Aspinall will be offering a *Romp through Genesis* to her Monday Morning Bible Study. Barbara will also be presenting the *Gnostic Gospels* on March 10 after coffee hour. Pastor Rick Sweeney will be covering *Revelations* on April 14th and 21st.

Congregational Life: There will be a special coffee hour on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. Make sure to check out the yummy treats prepared by the committee. On June 2 there will be a special coffee hour in celebration of our new Confirmands. The church picnic is scheduled for June 9, more details to follow.

Stewardship: We came very close to our goal of \$478,000!

Membership: The listening sessions have been going very well, three more are being planned for our church families—one will be at Mt. Kemble Lake. After all the listening sessions have taken place the results will be compiled for analysis.

Administrative Review: Caroline Ford has already done much of the work for this year's audit, the work is ongoing.

Worship and Music: The Masterworks Camerata is schedule for March 3 at 3:00 pm.

Finance: We ended the year \$7,000 in the black and were able to give small bonuses to our hard working staff members. Investment decisions were examined and altered to maximize profit. We are awaiting some reimbursement for the Windows Project.

Buildings and Grounds: They are under budget by a few thousand dollars! The next project is to strip and re-seal the parking lot. The rent for the brink manse will be increased for the first time in two years.

There will be a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 3 after worship.

Communion will be also be served on Sunday, March 3.

The next Session meeting will be on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at 7 pm.

Reverend Sweeney adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Coyle, Clerk of Session



Proof

“The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.”
~ Psalm 19:1

What proof do you need that God exists? No... really... what would it truly take to seal the deal for you... for anyone? We live in such a tangible, materialistic world where the burden of proof is often just that – a burden. Our ancestors lived in a much different time, a time of belief in a variety of things good and evil. Thankfully, those superstitious beliefs have disappeared, but what about God? In the wake of the supremacy of science and technology, what casualties have our beliefs in God suffered?

We live in a “show me,” bait-and-switch culture. In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge says, “I don't ship until I have the *cash in hand*.” Sound familiar? Spin doctors bend reality to fit their desired outcomes and goals. Conspiracy theories abound on so many issues appearing to be open-and-shut cases that it seems as if nothing is safe from being questioned, even those events witnessed by many people. Seriously, if people can be convinced that Elvis is still alive, how are we as Christians supposed to present enough evidence to prove that God exists?

One of the best responses I've heard to this question has to do with the apostles. It's been documented that these men existed, and it's also documented that almost all of them were martyred for their Christian beliefs. As a result, some of the best convincing evidence is found in the question, “Why would these men go to their deaths for something that wasn't real?”

Others point out the window and into the heavens. Similar to the quote from Psalm 19, there are those who say that the world around us and the seemingly infinite stars above our heads is proof that there is a God, an intelligent designer at work. Can you think of other reasons that may prove there is a God... any God? I'm sure you can, but for every single reason, there are going to be segments of people who disagree. Perhaps that's just human nature. Maybe there's something in us that can't turn away from a mystery, even if it's one we feel a need to create.

Look, for some of us, an ungrounded belief comes all too quickly. I'm reminded of that television commercial of a woman who brags about dating a French model. How does she know he's a French model? Well, she read his bio on the Internet, and anything on the Internet has to be true! Hopefully, you don't believe that, but it goes to show that there's a great deal of latitude out there when it comes to standards for faith.

In a world of superstitious beliefs, ethereal demons, and imagined incantations an intangible God was easily accepted as an appropriate defense. Nowadays, with nuclear weapons, virulent strains of actual viruses we can see under a microscope, random shooters arbitrarily blowing away innocent victims, and more, some would say an intangible God is not enough protection and doesn't supply a sufficient insurance policy for them. Real fears demand a real God, a materialistic defense.

You know what? Hogwash! Maybe, come to think of it, our ancestors had it easier when it comes to believing in God. Maybe faith needs to be exempted from the burden of proof. I don't want a tangible deity. I don't want quantitative proof of God. The moment you quantify something, you limit it. I, for one, don't want to put my God in a box. “I Am” is exactly the kind of God I want... with no name... with no limitations... because that kind of God can do anything.

My father used to say that faith in God was a crutch. That was before he got sick and his age brought wisdom. Eventually, God was all-important and filled his days and nights. In my father's last years, his Father was the most important thing in his life. Believe me – that was about as radical a change as one could hope to witness. But, hey, if someone wants to convince me that God doesn't exist, I say the burden of proof's on *their* shoulders. I have my real, intangible faith in my unquantifiable God, and that's all the proof I need.

FPCNV Book Club

February Book Selection:

The Innocents

By Francesca Segal

"Stylish, witty, wonderfully moreish" – A.D. Miller "The Innocents is an exuberant, sensitive, witty novel, elegantly written, partly a study of universal dramas of love, marriage and fear, partly a very modern, sassy London story, partly a Jewish novel. I found it irresistible" Simon Sebag Montefiore "A moving, funny, richly drawn story of a young man's attempts to find out who he wants to be when there are so many others who know best.

The Innocents is full of real pleasures and unexpected wisdom, this book sweeps you along" Esther Freud "A beautiful, bittersweet novel" – Gin Phillips "Written with wisdom and deliciously subtle wit, in the tradition of Jane Austen and Nancy Mitford. Francesca Segal has a remarkable ability to bring characters vividly to life who are at once warm, funny, complex, and utterly recognizable, a wonderfully readable novel: elegant, accomplished and romantic" A. Aciman

Meeting Dates and Book Selections

Where: Library

When: 7:30 pm

Mar 12 *The Innocents* by Francesca Segal

Apr 9 *Citizens of London* by Lynne Olson

May 14 *That Woman* by Anne Sebba

Jun 11 *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes

New members are welcome.

Francesca Segal was born in London in 1980. Brought up between England and America, she has been a freelance contributor to many of the UK's most prestigious publications. She has been a features writer at Tatler, and for three years wrote the Debut Fiction column in The Observer.



The Masterwork Camerata, a chamber ensemble comprised of a highly selective, mixed choir of 15-20 voices from the larger Masterwork Camerata chorus, will perform a concert program in the sanctuary on March 3 at 3 pm.

Ubi Caritas, Latin for "true charity," will feature such works as "Of the Father's Love Begotten; Jesu Duscis Memoria; He Shall Feed His Flock Like A Shepherd/Come Unto Me; Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming; LaLa La, Je Ne L'ose Dire; Nelly Bly; Turtle Dove; How Can I Keep From Singing; and Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal.

Masterwork Camerata's

Ubi Caritas

Sunday March 3 at 3 pm

Sun Min Lee, conductor
Carol Walker, accompanist



Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at Coffee Hour or at the door. For more about the Camerata, visit their website: www.masterworkchorus.org

Adult Ed ~ Coming Events

BARBARA ASPINALL, CANON MISSES: March 10

Are you curious about how the text of the New Testament came to be? We can agree that the Holy Spirit was at work in the process of writing, canonizing, and understanding Scripture, but how is it that we have some writings that are part of our New Testament and some that “didn’t make it,” like the Gospel of Thomas and the recently translated Gospel of Judas?



What were the criteria, the “acid test,” for deciding what is in and what is out? What are we to make of gospels and letters about Jesus and the early church that are not in our New Testament and yet have ancient attestation? On March 10, at 11:30 am in the Library, we will have a chance to think and talk about the ins and outs of our New Testament canon.

PASTOR RICK SWEENEY, REVELATION AS COMEDY: April 14 & 21



Woodcut by Albrecht Durer, 1498

Dragons, multi-headed beasts, bowls of wrath, death riding a pale horse, and the dead brought back to life... It sounds like a bad science fiction movie, but it is part of the imagery of the Book of Revelation.

Some people shy away from the book of *Revelation* because it is scary. Others avoid it because it is steeped in mystery. The reality is that the *Revelation* to John is a comedy. It’s not a ha ha comedy. Rather it is comedy in the classic sense of a work that provides a happy ending. God reveals to John that God is in charge and that ultimately God will make sure that God’s people win.

Pastor Rick will lead a two part study of the final book of the New Testament after worship on April 14 and April 21.

Looking Ahead...

JUNE TAMBURRO, PRISON MINISTRY: May 5

PASTOR RICK SWEENEY, CHRISTIAN FAMILY FEUD: June 9



Art in Bloom

Friday, April 6-10

Church of Christ the King

Gala Biannual Art Show and Party

Sponsored by Friends of Kemmerer Library

For Information: Carol Conger 973-539-9531

To Volunteer: Bernice Paton 973-539-5168

Kentucky Update

Gordon reports that, as a result of the Deacons' bake sale to benefit our eight Kentucky families, each of the households have received a ham, 2 dozen rolls, 2 cans of green beans, 2 cans of corn, a 5 lb. bag potatoes, a 5 lb. bag of flour and meal, a 4 pound bag of pinto beans, a can of sauerkraut, 1 dozen eggs, and 1 gallon of milk.



Maundy Thursday Service

Deep Sadness, Unshakeable Confidence

Thursday, March 28 ~ 7:30 pm

Please join us for this special Tenebrae service to bear witness to the lengthening of shadows.



Easter Memorial Dedications

If you would like to make a donation in memory of or in honor of a loved one, please complete this form and send in your donation by March 24. This year your donations will be used to purchase and plant weeping cherry trees on the church grounds.

Please select your preference:

- In memory of In honor of

Dedication From:

Dedicated to:

Easter Sunday Schedule



Sunrise Service

PCNV Cemetery

6:30 am

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb...

Luke 24:1-2a

Start your Easter with this Sunrise Celebration of our Risen Lord.

Worship Services

9:00 am & 11:15 am

There will again be two Worship Services on Easter Morning.



Easter Morning Breakfast

Hosted by the Deacons

Fellowship Hall

10:00-11:00 am

Join us for ham, egg casserole, sausage, bagels, muffins, fruit salad, cold cereal and milk, coffee, tea, and fellowship.

Children's Egg Hunt

Fellowship Hall

10:00 am

In our traditional Egg Hunt, bright eggs will be hidden throughout the grounds for your children to find. The egg is a symbol of the rebirth of the earth in celebrations of spring and was adopted by early Christians as a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus.

Children, bring a basket or bag to collect your eggs in.



Member News

From the New Jersey Conservation Foundation:

Trustee Ed Babbott Retires After 44 Years

New Jersey Conservation Foundation's longest-serving trustee, Edward Babbott of Basking Ridge, stepped down this past summer after 44 years of service.



Michele Byers congratulates Ed Babbott at the President's Reception.

Ed became involved during the grassroots fight in the 1960s to keep the Great Swamp from being paved over for an international airport. After winning the "Battle of the Swamp", the Great Swamp Committee evolved into New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and Ed stayed on to guide us along a journey resulting in the preservation of more than 120,000 acres of land ... and counting!

Ed wrote a poem and read it at the President's Reception in September. Thank you, Ed, for your years of service and unwavering devotion to helping this "acorn" grow into a tall tree!

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Thoughts on Stepping Down

An acorn small drops from on high,
Passing leaves and branches by,
Falling with result in mind,
A fertile piece of ground to find.

As Emile'd say without a doubt,
"A full grown tree starts from a sprout,"
Peeking its head from out the earth,
Which gives the sign of its rebirth.

And as the years pass slowly by,
Its budding branches seek out the sky,
Changing form to full from slight,
Making shade which blocks the light.

It spawns each year a brand new crop,
(A plan which nature cannot stop.)
And from this single lovely tree
A forest full one starts to see.

So has this seed of helping hands,
Of passing bills, of saving lands,
Of teaching youth, of stopping sprawls,
Of urging green instead of malls.

Of rallying others to the cause,
Of insuring counties obey their laws,
Of keeping focus clear and straight
To improve conditions in this state.

I am so lucky to have been a part
Of this growing tree from its early start.
I've watched its trunk turn both straight and true
Thanks to the work of all of you.

I've served with joy for many years;
We've had our smiles, we've had our tears,
Some days went fast, some seemed so long,
But never have we been more strong.

I'm one of those who stands amazed
At paths we've trod, of trails we've blazed,
At distance travelled, at where we've been,
At making special The State We're In.

I'm leaving now this growing tree,
Knowing it's what it's meant to be,
That its many victories already made
Have helped its leaves provide the shade.

I wish both it and each of you
Continuing success in all you do,
I'll follow now with an avid heart,
Glad that I have played a part.



Sophie Lee was born on February 15, at 4:10 pm. Congratulations to Min Kwon and Leonard Lee on their new arrival!



Amélie Année Gerbracht, daughter of Alexis and Patrick Gerbracht, granddaughter of Harriett Schneider, was baptized on Sunday, February 24. Congratulations to all!

Frank Flores

Frank Flores, father of Ruth Chaney, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, February 27. He was 91. Please keep Ruth and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

If you would like to send a card or note:

Ruth Chaney, 28 Lake Trail West, Morristown, NJ 07960

The Presbyterian Church of Chatham Women's Retreat

March 9, 2013
9 am to 3 pm

At the Presbyterian Church of New Vernon

The theme of the retreat will be *Ester* and will be presented by Debbie Belusa. She is a member of the Chatham church and will be graduating from Drew Theological Seminary in May.

They will be serving breakfast and lunch.

The cost is \$10.00

Reply to the office at PCCT by March 4.

973-635-2340

They would love it if we would join them.

Nursery School Announcement

We are pleased to announce that the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon has approved plans to transfer responsibility for NVP Nursery School to a new preschool entity at the end of the current school year. The Church decided to disengage from NVPNS due to increased competition and changing demographics resulting in enrollment projections below the cost of services. NVPNS announced on January, 2013 that it would not accept students for the 2013-14 school year.

Based on support in the community, and the desire for the school to remain open, a group of individuals took on the task to continue the preschool. The Church approved plans to transfer the school to a new non-profit entity at the end of the current school year. Harding Country Day School (HCDS) was recently formed as a non-profit entity, has appointed its own Board of Directors and will assume the school license upon transfer from the Church on July 1, 2013. The Church will no longer be involved in the pre-k school and assumes no responsibility for any actions or commitments of the Harding Country Day School. We believe this is an excellent solution for the church, community and employees of the school.

Outreach Focus: Community Enterprise Solutions



The Community Enterprise Solutions' (CE Solutions) motto "Changing Obstacles into Opportunities" is based on the premise that it is only possible to truly improve the quality of life in developing countries when you create opportunities for residents to provide solutions for their communities. Hand-outs of donated materials, although well intentioned, are often neither effective nor sustainable. CE Solutions works closely with residents to nurture initiatives that provide long lasting and positive economic and health impacts. One area of focus with Community Enterprise Solutions is a health initiative that works by empowering first-time women entrepreneurs to sell vital solutions that address such issues as vision problems, pulmonary and water-borne diseases, lack of appropriate nutrition, and more.

Our contributions were directed to the Centro Explorativo educational initiative located in La Pista, Nebaj in the western highlands of Guatemala. The Centro Explorativo provides first-time access to the tools and resources necessary for underserved children and youth in the Ixil Region to improve their educational opportunities, personal growth opportunities, and critical thinking and to develop a love for learning and reading. What began in 2003 as a closet-sized library with 100 books is now a full service education center operating in the towns of Nebaj and La Pista. This center has over 2,200 books and provides access to free computer and internet classes. It holds free after-school classes for children and employs three full-time teachers. It is the only institution of its kind in the region.

We specifically funded the healthy snack initiative, which enabled 27,679 healthy snacks to be distributed in 2011 and 2012 by the Centro Explorativo to the students that attend its school and after-school programs. Guatemala suffers from one of the worst chronic malnutrition rates in the world. Our donation of \$7,455 was graciously acknowledged by Co-founders Greg Van Kirk and Bucky Glickley. We funded 100% of the cost of healthy snack initiative, which will lead to further improvements in the participants' health.

To learn more about CE Solutions, please visit their website www.cesolutions.org. To learn more about the initiative we are funding, click on the tab "Our Social Impact" and "Health." The community education taking place at the Centro Explorativo facility is part of a sustainable social innovation plan that is having long lasting positive effects of the health of the children in the region.



March Movie

Bagdad Café
Wednesday, March 13
7 pm at The Chaney's'

Bavarian tourist Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) fights with her husband in the Mojave Desert and storms off to a nearby café-motel, where she develops a prickly friendship with the owner, Brenda (CCH Pounder). In time, they turn the decrepit cafe into a local hot spot, and Jasmin becomes a popular entertainer. The characters who collect at the café, including Hollywood-set painter Rudi (Jack Palance), form an odd sort of family.

1988 PG 92 minutes

De-Stress with Chair Yoga

Join MJ Turnbull, certified Yoga instructor and inspiring teacher, on Wednesday mornings at 10 o'clock at the Library for the perfect antidote to the winter blues. Give yourself the gift of a straighter spine, muscle tone, and renewed energy! A \$10 fee is requested but not obligatory; pay what you can.

Any questions?
 Talk to enthusiasts
 Emmie Corbin,
 Bernice Paton, or
 Anne Thomas.

Suitable for all levels.



St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Sunday, March 17, 2013

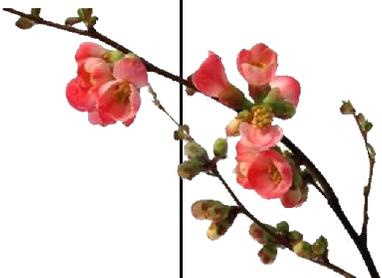
The Congregational Life Committee
 will host Coffee Hour on
 Sunday, March 17.

Please join us for traditional Irish treats, coffee,
 and some very special entertainment.

Don't forget to wear something green.
 We'll provide the shamrocks.



March 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Church Office CLOSED Good Friday AA Mtg - noon	2
3 Communion Annual Meeting of the Congregation Masterwork Camerata Concert In the Sanctuary 3 pm	4 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am	5	6 Youth Group Dinner & Cookie Ministry 6:00-8:00 pm	7 Bible Study 8:30-9:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	8 AA Meeting noon	9 Chatham Presbyterian Women's Retreat 9 am-3 pm
10 Confirmation Class 9-9:30 am Barbara Aspinall "Canon Misses" 11:30 am in the library	11 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am Deacons 7:30 pm	12	13 Movie Night Bagdad Café at the home of the Chaneys 7 pm	14 Bible Study 8:30-9:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	15 AA Meeting noon	16 AHOD 7:30 am-5:30 pm
17 Congregational Life St Patrick's Day Celebration Special treats & entertainment at Coffee Hour	18 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am Finance Committee Meeting 7 pm	19 Session Mtg. 7 pm	20	21 Bible Study 8:30-9:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	22 AA Meeting noon	23
24 Palm Sunday Easter Memorials due	25 Women's Bible Study 9:30-11 am	26	27	28 Bible Study 8:30-9:30 am Tenebrae Svc. 7:30 pm	29 AA Meeting noon	30 AHOD 7:30 am-5:30 pm
31 Easter Sunday 6:30 am Sunrise Svc. 9 am Worship Svc. 10 am Egg Hunt 10-11 am Breakfast 11:15 am Worship						

March Worship at FPCNV, 2013

Sunday, March 3

Third Sunday in Lent
Communion

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney
Liturgist: Mindo Swartz

Sermon: *Seekers*

Text:
Psalm 63:1-8
Isaiah 55:1-9

Sunday, March 10

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney
Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *Ambassador to Them*

Text:
Psalm 32
II Corinthians 5:16-21

Sunday, March 17

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney
Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *My Own*

Text:
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14

Sunday, March 24

Palm Sunday

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney
Liturgist: TBA

Sermon: *Emptied*

Text:
Luke 19:28-40
Philippians 2:5-11

Thursday, March 28

Maundy Thursday

7:30 pm

Communion by Intinction
Preacher: Dr. Sweeney

Tenebrae Service

Deep Sadness, Unshakeable Confidence

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday

Preacher: Dr. Sweeney
Liturgist: 9:00 am—TBA
Liturgist: 11:15 am—Phil Van Kirk

Sermon: *Mary*

Text:
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
John 20:1-18

The Pipe Organ

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



MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, March 3

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Sunday, March 10

Barbara Aspinall, "Canon Misses"

Sunday, March 17

Congregational Life's St. Patrick's Celebration

March 28 ~ 7:30 pm

Maunder Thursday Service

March 31 - Easter Services

Sunrise Service: 6:30 am at PCNV Cemetery

Worship Services: 9 am & 11:15 am

Children's Easter Egg Hunt 10 am

Easter Breakfast 10 am

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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