

# THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW VERNON



MORNING WORSHIP — SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

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At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:1-5

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# THE BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

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## GATHERING

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**Prelude** *Be Thou My Vision*

*There is a Balm in Gilead*

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

**Introit**

**Welcome**

**Call to Worship\***

Creator of the world, eternal God,  
**we have come from many places for a little while.**

Redeemer of humanity, God-with-us,  
**we have come with all our differences,  
seeking common ground.**

Spirit of unity, go-between God,  
**we have come on journeys of our own,  
to a place where journeys meet.**

So here, in this shelter house, let us take time together.  
**For when paths cross and pilgrims gather,  
there is much to share.**

**Hymn\*** *Let Everything That Has Breath* (insert)

**Call to Confession**

The proof of God's amazing love is this:

While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Because we have faith, we dare to approach  
God with confidence. In faith and penitence,  
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

## **Prayer of Confession**

Most merciful God, we confess that we have  
sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done, and by what we have left  
undone. We have not loved you with our whole  
heart; we have not loved our neighbors as  
ourselves.

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For  
the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on  
us and forgive us; that we may delight in your  
will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your  
Name. Amen.

## **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Listen to these words of Jesus,  
words that we can trust:

"Don't be afraid."

"I love you."

"Your sins are forgiven."

"I will be with you always."

Write these words in our hearts, loving God,  
let them take root in our living.

## **Hymn 582\* *Glory to God***

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.  
As it was in the beginning,

\*INDICATES PLEASE STAND IN BODY OR SPIRIT

**is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**World without end, without end. Amen.**

**As it was in the beginning,**

**is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

### **Passing the Peace\***

The peace of Christ be with you

**And also with you**

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### HEARING THE WORD

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## **The Baptism of Finley Marie Smith**

### **Sung Baptismal Blessing**

God to enfold you,

Christ to uphold you,

Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight;

So may God grace you,

Heal and embrace you,

Lead you through darkness into the light.

### **The Blessing of the Backpacks**

Loving God, Bless our schools, our students,  
and the teachers, administrators, and many others  
who make their learning and growing possible.

Be with them and help them as they begin a new  
year of learning, teaching, growing, and serving...

May their minds and their pencils be sharp.  
May their lunches never be forgotten at home.  
May their erasers remind them that mistakes are okay.

God, thank you for glue sticks and homework folders,  
for chrome-books and composition books  
all waiting to be used.

Thank you for schools and libraries and teachers.  
Thank you for your gifts of curiosity and wisdom.

Bless these backpacks, and all who carry them...

We pray this and everything in the name of your Son,  
who knows the blessings and the challenges  
of childhood and learning. Amen.

### **Prayer for Illumination**

For the word of God in scripture,  
for the word of God among us,  
for the word of God within us,  
**thanks be to God.**

### **First Scripture Lesson** *Romans 14:1-12* (p. 163)

This is the word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Second Scripture Lesson** *Matthew 18:21-35* (p. 20)

This is the word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Hymn 769\*** *For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table*

# Sermon

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## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

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**Offertory** *Anthem All Things Bright and Beautiful*  
John Rutter

### Hymn 606\* Doxology

#### Affirmation of Faith (from the Iona Community)

We believe that God is present  
in the darkness before dawn;  
in the waiting and uncertainty  
where fear and courage join hands,  
conflict and caring link arms,  
and the sun rises over barbed wire.

We believe in a with-us God  
who sits down in our midst  
to share our humanity.

We affirm a faith  
that takes us beyond the safe place:  
into action, into vulnerability  
and into the streets.

We commit ourselves to work for change  
and put ourselves on the line;  
to bear responsibility, take risks,  
live powerfully and face humiliation;  
to stand with those on the edge;

to choose life and be used by the Spirit  
for God's new community of hope. Amen.

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

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SENDING

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Hymn 539\* *We Will Go Out With Joy*

Benediction & Congregational Amen\*

Postlude

## Children's Ministry

Our nursery, for children ages 2 and under, is located in Fellowship Hall and is staffed. Children can be dropped off before worship or at any point during the service.

After the "Chat with Children" during worship, children move to the Fellowship Hall for Sunday School.

### We have 3 classes available:

Pre-K (ages 3-5)

K-2nd grade

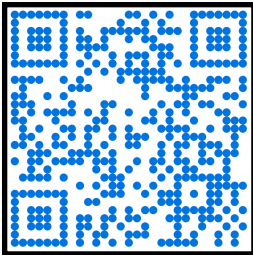
3rd grade and up

Children can be picked up from Sunday School after worship in Fellowship Hall (during coffee hour). If you have any questions Pastor Hayley is happy to speak with you.

## LAST WEEK

Attendance: 51

|               | Last<br>Week | Year to<br>Date | Commitments<br>for 2026 |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Annual Giving | \$2,700      | \$277,700       | \$412,000               |
| Plate         | \$400        | \$14,400        | \$32,000                |



Venmo



ACH/Card

# WEDNESDAY

## SEPTEMBER 16

### 12:00 PM

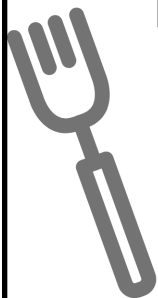
#### FPCNV Library

LET'S DO LUNCH

Retirees, please join  
us for lunch,  
conversation, and  
community!

RSVP: Faith

fwinow@gmail.com



## Halloween Costume Drive

First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon

Join FPCNV as we partner  
with Jersey Cares to  
ensure Halloween is  
magical for all families!

Donate any new or  
gently used costumes  
(up to age 14), including  
wands, capes, wings, etc.



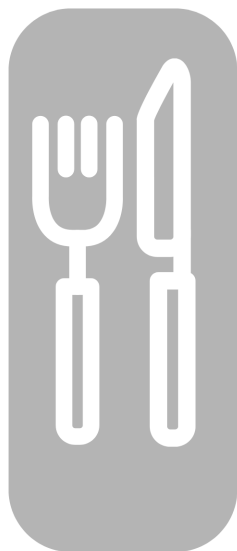
Donation box is located in  
Fellowship Hall, 4 Lees Hill Rd  
contact [hayley@pcnv.org](mailto:hayley@pcnv.org)

DROP  
OFF  
BEFORE  
OCT 16

# LET'S DO LUNCH

Hosts Needed:  
**November 18 &  
December 9**

Please reach out to Jane Coyle at  
(973) 879-6360 or  
[janeacoyle@gmail.com](mailto:janeacoyle@gmail.com) if you are  
interested or have any questions!  
All expenses can be reimbursed  
with a receipt.



✧ ✧ **THE DEACONS** ARE LOOKING FOR

**COFFEE  
HOUR  
HOSTS**



Sign up boards are located in Fellowship Hall

ASK A DEACON IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR EMAIL OUR OFFICE AT [OFFICEADMIN@PCNV.ORG](mailto:OFFICEADMIN@PCNV.ORG)

# **VOLUNTEER TEAM THIS SUNDAY**

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## **Liturgist**

Mia Mallen

## **Ushers**

Consuelo & Craig Grant

## **Flowers**

Finlayson & Smith Families

*In honor of Finley Marie Smith,  
given with love from her Grandparents*

## **Coffee Hour**

Consuelo & Craig Grant

# **DEACONS ON DUTY**

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## **Coffee Hour**

Carol Conger, Cindy Thompson,  
Meg Richardson, & Twinkle Tong

## **Flower Delivery**

Elizabeth Califano, Christine Taranto,  
& Michelle Vince



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW VERNON

## CHURCH STAFF

Rev. William Stone III, Pastor

Rev. Hayley O'Connor, Associate for Youth and Family Ministry

Stephen Fox, Director of Music Ministry

Rachael Gareau, Director of Children's Choirs

Fraser Miller, Operations Coordinator

Diego (Tony) Rodriguez, Church Custodian

## CHURCH LEADERS

### Session

Donna Miller, Clerk

Sarah Conine

Susan Fischer

Sam LaNasa

Hunter Lostan

Don Richardson

Kreamer Rooke

Matt Taranto

Ben Thompson

Candace Weeks

### Deacons

Meg Richardson, Moderator

Eileen Bevan

Nancy Burrows

Elizabeth Califano

Carol Conger

Melissa Ramsey

Christine Taranto

Cindy Thompson

Twinkle Tong

Michelle Vince

Jane Zielinski