

# POMPTON REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

January 2013

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## Thoughts on January from Pastor Debbie

*"Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first day of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past." - Henry Ward Beecher*

New Year's Day often brings with it a laundry list of resolutions. Things we desire to change about our lives, our habits. Some resolve to go the gym, start a new diet, quit smoking, be more organized; and on and on the list goes. It is human nature to desire good changes in our lives, to start fresh and new, and sadly, it is the human condition to have difficulty making changes that stick. Romans 12: 1-2 has a way to make changes that stick, changes that matter now and for eternity.

Here is what it says in The Message, a translation by Eugene Petersen: *"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."*

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This is practical advice for those of us who are seeking to follow the Way of Jesus. It is also the tough part, offering all of who we are and what we do to God as an offering. All - that means everything. It means the prayers we offer for others, and the public and private praise we offer to God. It also means the words we speak about others and our attitude when we are stuck in traffic and late for an appointment. I don't know about you, but for me, that is harder since my nature takes over and I often don't consider God in those situations.

They say it only takes 30 days to make a new habit, to rewire our brains in order to practice the new habit without a second thought. What would it be like if we resolved this year to live this verse from the book of Romans? The verse says God will bring out the best in us. Now that is a resolution I can live with.

Happy New Year!

On the Journey,  
*Pastor Debbie*



## Fellowship Happenings for 2013



It's a New Year and time to start marking your calendar! As we move through the calendar, more events and activities will be included with even more details! We look forward to a fun and fulfilling 2013!

**January 27** - Chili Luncheon - The Fellowship Committee asks its Church Family to bring in their favorite chili to share immediately following the Service.

**March 24** - Soup Luncheon - The Fellowship Committee asks its Church Family to bring in their favorite soup to share immediately following the Service.

**October 5** - Bus Trip to *Sight and Sound* to see "Noah."



**October 19** - There's 289 days until Autumnfest!

**December 11** - Senior Luncheon.

## God is Leading Us into 2013

By Elaine Peacock

Every time we sing "Precious Lord Take My Hand," my mind wanders back to a bitter January night when I was riding the NYC subway to catch my bus to my warm condo in NJ. For those of you who have never ridden the NYC subway, it is full of all kinds of characters, including the next singers hoping to be discovered, or at least, hoping to snare a few dollars from weary passengers on their way home. This night was different. I heard this beautiful voice from the other end of the car; she was singing "Precious Lord Take My Hand." As she slowly walked through the car, I noticed her eyes were closed. It was as if she was transfixed on Jesus as she walked. She wore black garbage bags over her clothes and on her feet to help keep out the cold. I have never, before or since, seen so many hands reaching out with money in them. She never opened her eyes or made eye contact with anyone; she just kept walking and singing as she entered the next car. I believe this homeless woman was truly an angel sent with a lesson for all of us: that with the New Year upon us, this is our chance to start over, to stop trying to make it on our own and to let our precious Lord take our hand and lead us where he knows we should go.

Happy New Year PRC!





**From**

Susan Christie  
 Susan Christie  
 Rick & Shirley Montanari  
 Eleanor Haling  
 Albert Evangelista  
 Susan Grecco  
 Caroline & David DeWilde  
 John & Nancy Nelson  
 Helen & Chuck Gioia  
 Ellen and Paul Lockwood  
 Geneva & Evan Maletsky  
 Lorna & Kevin Carroll  
 Dot Ploch  
 Corinne Tyndall  
 Eleanor Finke

**In Memory of**

Jean Anne Christie  
 Allan & Blenda Ball  
 Ted Holmes  
 Loved Ones  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon  
 John Roon

**Designation**

Undesignated  
 Undesignated  
 Stewardship  
 Undesignated  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Music  
 Bells  
 Scholarship

**Given By**

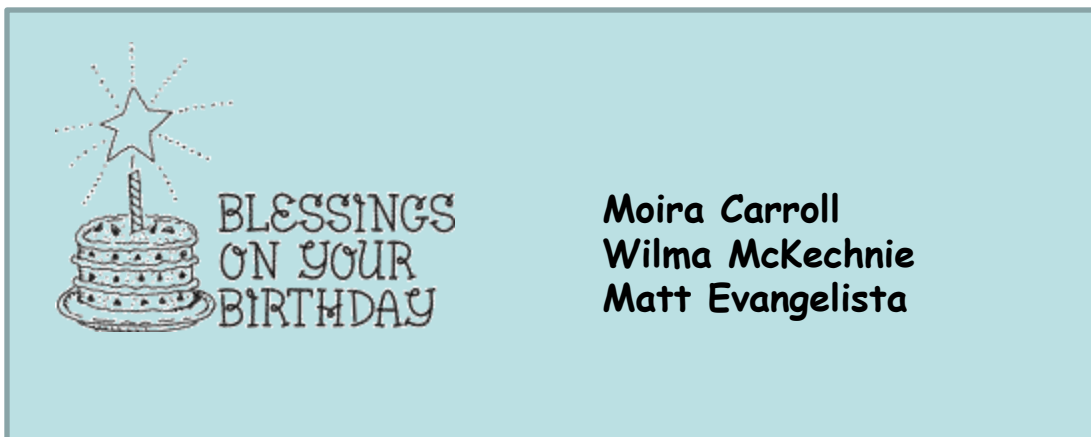
Cas & Jean Stark  
 Cas & Jean Stark

**In Honor Of**

Alfred Fedak  
 Robert Oliphant

**Designation**

Endowment  
 Endowment



- October 29, 2012 – Super-Storm Sandy devastates Ortley Beach, NJ and the Jersey shore.
- November 5, 2012 – The conversation started by a 5-year-old, that planted the seed, that started *Santa's Rooftop Response*:

"I guess he isn't coming."

"Who? "

"Santa."

"Why? "

"Because there are no roofs for him  
to land on."

•November 30, 2012 - Three weeks passed since Little Man first expressed his concern about Santa not coming. For three weeks I pushed to find every child in Ortley Beach and the surrounding towns to provide him/her a Christmas gift. I found some partnerships with Toms River Schools, but what about Lavallette School and Seaside? And then the Toms River Schools reported that there were *over 700* children affected by the storm! In addition to the sheer number, we also had to match the gifts with the children's wants. After a conversation on a Wednesday that left me frustrated, followed by some quiet tears, I realized that I couldn't run this alone, I thought that I may be supported by a church, but I haven't truly accepted the support of God. After some other quiet time in a dark parking lot before yet another meeting, I was lead to my motto "Let Go, Let God."

I still had no idea if we would be able to knowingly match the donations to the children's likes, to give that magical Christmas smile that said, "There is a Santa Claus," but I had to "Let Go, Let God" and know that He will take care of it. He will make the matches that are needed; He will bring the joy to the children.

We also discovered, by the end of that week, that there were other donors supporting the Seaside Heights and Lavallette Schools. The three weeks left were focused on getting the donations to Toms River and then sorted, and planning the large Holiday Party for December 22. There was a lot I worried about, a lot of help that was still needed, but I "Let Go, Let God" and knew He will lead us to what needed to be done.

• December 22, 2012 – Santa landed at Toms River High School thanks to the MONOC EMS crew and helicopter. The joint efforts of the East Dover, Ocean Beach, Pequannock Co #2, Pompton Lakes, Riverdale and Wayne Co. #3 Fire Departments, as well as the Wayne Police Department, made for an amazing entrance for Santa into the school. The support of the personnel for the party contributed to a spectacular event for the children and their families.

The day was best summed up by a comment one of the firemen made: "I have to say that I now know how the Grinch felt when his heart grew three sizes that day. The appreciation on the residents' faces of Toms River, the hugs that we received and the tears of happiness that were shed today have filled my heart with the Christmas spirit and have left a lasting impression in my soul."

The party brought overwhelming joy to the children and their families. Before the gifts where even opened, the children and their parents had that magical Christmas smile on their faces. After the party, there were many parents that posted comments, as well as sent e-mails, with thank-yous for a wonderful afternoon. Then, after Christmas morning, a few more contacted me, who said they and their children were surprised by the gifts and gift cards they were given. They said they would never forget what had been done for them.

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This does not wrap up, and end, *Santa's Rooftop Response* as easily as I had thought. I have some ongoing concerns, please remember them in prayer:

\*First, for one young person who we were put in touch with; she tried to use the goodwill of *Santa's Rooftop Response* for personal gain.

\*Second, for all the families who were affected by Super Storm Sandy as they work over the coming year to rebuild their homes, and their lives.

\*Third, as we seek the best way to use the monetary donations that are remaining in the account.

\*Fourth, as we look ahead to Christmas 2013 and how *Santa's Rooftop Response* will continue its mission to provide Christmas to displaced children.

Thank you for your support of our project, as well as your prayers when we didn't even know we needed them.

Cristina Earle, and family



Dear Friends & Family,

Although we are separated by many miles, we are joined together in thanksgiving the gift of our Savior, Christ the Lord! We pray that no matter your current circumstance this Christmas, that you might grasp how wide and long and high and deep is God's love for you in Christ.

Merry Christmas,

-Mark, Deb & Zachary Wilson

*Merry Christmas*

*December 2012*



*Christmas Blessings from Phnom Penh Bible School!*





Pompton Reformed Church supports **UrbanPromise** in their ministry to the children of Camden. Here is what our support has helped to make happen in 2012.

This past year—our 25th in the city of Camden—was an incredibly full and fruitful one at UrbanPromise.

Despite, or maybe because of, serving in one of the nation's poorest and most violent settings, our community has remained vibrant and creative, continually implementing innovative approaches to educating, engaging, and nurturing Camden youth. *New partnerships have been established, various service projects initiated, and programs and projects strengthened.*

At our Camden Forward School, students began learning about general and instrumental music through a partnership with Settlement Music School. UrbanPromise Academy students are participating in the school's first robotics team and taking law courses taught by Rutgers Law School. An additional 15 Street Leader teens were employed as health educators, teaching younger children about positive health practices through funding from Walmart's State Giving program. And Rebecca Bryan, MSN, CRNP launched UrbanPromise's first Wellness Center through a collaboration with First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield.

Outside of UrbanPromise, youth and staff are giving back to others. Teens engaged in Hurricane Irene cleanup in North Carolina and staff volunteered in Tom's River, NJ to clean houses affected by Hurricane Sandy. UrbanPromise Academy students are volunteering at the Food Bank of South Jersey and cleaning a local park that was once an African American Civil War cemetery.

Because of your gifts and support, UrbanPromise is able to offer all this and more to over 600 children and teens in the city each year. *Thank you for your generosity and for investing in the lives of countless Camden youth.* Our entire community wishes you a very blessed and joyous New Year.

With gratitude,

Jodina Hicks  
*Executive Director, UrbanPromise*

Each week our sanctuary is beautified by flowers behind our altar in loving memory or in honor of a loved one, or to commemorate a special occasion. If you'd like to schedule flowers for any Sunday, notify the church office. Cost is \$30.



## Interesting Books for a New Year!

As the New Year begins you might be looking for a book to start the year off right. Here is a selection of books with Christian themes for groups or individuals to read and discuss! *-submitted by Anna Gordon*

### **Heck Where the Bad Kids Go** by Dale E. Basye

Have you ever wondered what happens when kids die? Heck of course, it isn't quite Hell and it's definitely not Heaven. Milton knows why his sister Marlo ends up here but he was a good kid, he shouldn't be in Heck too. Travel with Milton and his guide Virgil through the 9 circles of Heck as he tries to break out. This is the fun first book in the Heck series, if you love it make sure to read all the rest.

### **The Fault in Our Stars** by John Green

John Green is a teen literary powerhouse who has now done the unimaginable. He has created a cancer book for teens where the focus isn't on the cancer. Read this one and see if you could survive these teens' lives. Then remember how many people do live like this and survive every day.

### **Small as an Elephant** by Jennifer Richard Jacobson

Have you ever been disappointed by your friends, teachers, parents or coworkers? Jack has been disappointed time and time again by a mother who has abandoned him at 11 years old. He doesn't dwell on being angry, he just starts searching. This is a great story about the power of forgiveness.

### **Seven Story Mountain** by Thomas Merton

Thomas Merton's book at over 400 pages doesn't really fit the vibe for this list, but if you are looking for something about more serious about Christian Life check out his autobiography. Even if you only manage to get half way through, I am sure you will find some chapter, page, or sentence that will tickle your fancy.

### **There is no Dog** by Meg Rosoff

If you don't have the sense of humor of a 15-year-old teenage boy, don't bother picking this up. For everyone else, this is a hilarious book that reimagines God not as an omnipotent deity, but as a kid who got the job that no one else wanted. Why did creation take six days? God got bored and wanted to do something else, of course.

### **Unsqueezed** by Margot Starbuck

Have you ever imagined a world where it didn't matter if your shoes matched your handbag or if your shirt was from this season or last? If so, check out Margot's book Unsqueezed, where she will help you step outside of your own body in order to better serve God. Yes, this book was written by Pastor Peter's wife, which should be more than enough reason to pick it up!

## **Consistory Roundtable of Thanks!**

(from December's Consistory)

-Those who **volunteered for Pompton's Holiday Stroll**, serving hot chocolate and donut holes to hundreds of passers-by, and **those who again served** hot chocolate at the **Toys for Tots** event....and for the **many who assisted** in so many ways with **Santa's Rooftop Response** toy drive for victims of Terrible Storm Sandy.

--To **Jim Laux** for repainting all the sanctuary stands to match the color of our Chancel area. Also to **Stan Dunitz, Al Kuebler** and **Terry Terhune**, for hanging the 200th Anniversary Quilt, and for **those who set up our outdoor nativity scene**.





1st Wed., Jan. 2: 6:30 pm Operations Committee  
7:30 pm Worship Committee

2nd Sun., Jan. 13: 11:30 am Youth Team

2nd Mon., Jan. 8: 7 pm Finance Committee

2nd Wed., Jan. 9: 7:30 pm Missions Team

3rd Mon., Jan. 21: 7:15 pm Christian Education Committee

3rd Wed., Jan. 16: 7:00 pm Consistory

4th Wed., Jan. 23: 7:30 pm Fellowship Committee

Every Tuesday: 1:30 pm Knitters

~Bell Choir meets on Tues. evenings and/or Sundays. See Janine for details~



Pasta sauce, canned fruit, mac & cheese, Parmalat milk, peanut butter, jelly, detergent, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash and soap bars. Low-fat, low-sodium products are always accepted.

*Thank you for supporting this important mission needed by so many!*

## **DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

The Deadline for *Newsletter Articles* is the last Sunday of the month. Please send submissions to [prcletter@gmail.com](mailto:prcletter@gmail.com) or feel free to drop it in the mail slot in the church office!

The deadline for February's  
newsletter is  
Sunday, January 27, 2013.