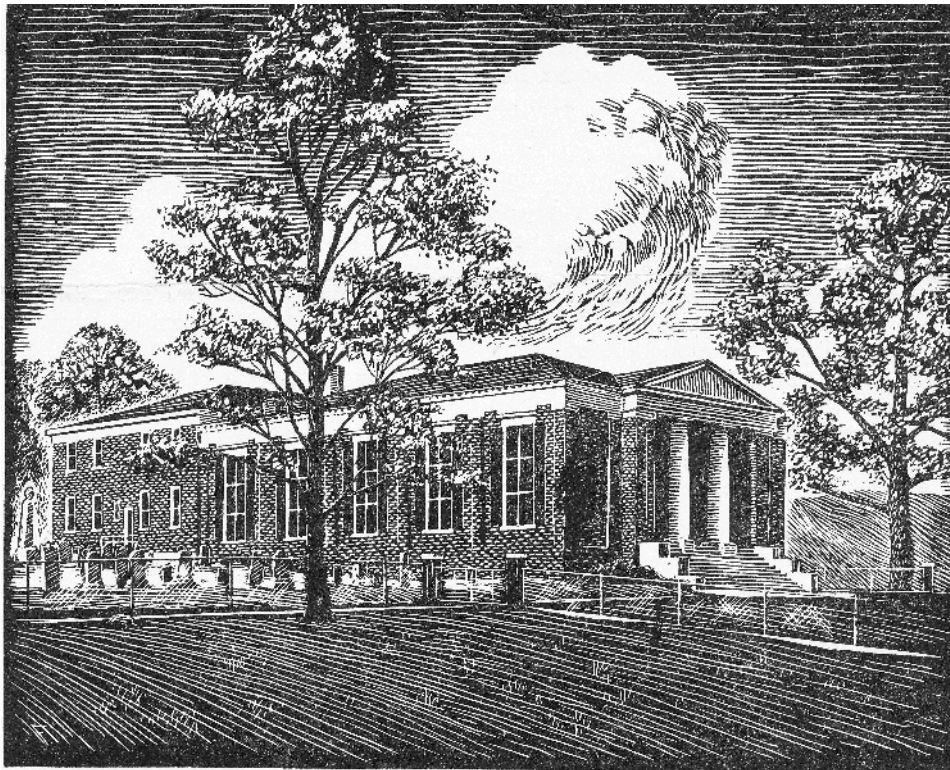


# CONGREGATIONAL MISSION STUDY

FEBRUARY 2009



**NEW PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
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## **HISTORY OF NEW PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

New Providence is a historic rural church that was organized in 1746 when most of this area was unsettled wilderness territory. Many changes have taken place over the last 262 years as the area has been populated and our church has grown, and New Providence has been instrumental in several firsts in the Presbyterian denomination.

The first “first” at New Providence was the organization of the Synod of Virginia on October 22, 1788. The following May, the Virginia synod joined the synods of New York-New Jersey, Philadelphia, and the Carolinas in Philadelphia for the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. It was only fitting that the synod be invited to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary here. On October 22, 1888, all the hopes, plans, and hard work of the congregation were realized in the success of that meeting.

The work of the women of New Providence has been critical to the church from the formation of the Ladies Benevolent Society on November 24, 1819. The founders created the first organization in the Presbyterian Church based on a “circle” plan—a concept later promoted to women’s groups throughout the southern church and now an integral component of the Presbyterian Women organization.

The Sabbath School was organized in 1833 by James Moore Brown, son of our second pastor, and the first Sabbath School Building was built in 1886. Dr. Henry W. McLaughlin was called to serve New Providence in 1909. He believed that no child should be beyond walking distance of a Sunday School, and as many as five outpost Sunday Schools were established by the church.

As a result of Dr. McLaughlin’s strong leadership, the size of the congregation doubled and the Sunday School Building and lecture hall were outgrown. Through his efforts, our present Sunday School Building was built. The campaign to build the structure gave New Providence status across the South for its innovative and energetic approach to education in a rural congregation.

After sixteen years at New Providence, Dr. McLaughlin left behind one of the largest, strongest, and most successful rural churches in the south, with a congregation of nearly 700 members, a Sunday School of 652 members, and a \$30,000 budget.

The tradition of service to missions that was begun by the Ladies Benevolent Society in 1819 continues here today. Mission Next Door, a local mission project started at New Providence, is made up of teams of volunteers from our church and other churches. They join together to provide home repairs to our neighbors who may be physically or financially unable to undertake them on their own. In 2008, volunteers working more than 1,020 hours completed 13 projects at a cost of over \$10,000.

Guided by the wisdom and example of our forefathers, we look forward with great anticipation to more “firsts” at New Providence as we serve God in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## NEW PROVIDENCE AREA PROFILE

New Providence Presbyterian Church is located in a rural area approximately three miles north of Brownsburg, Virginia, in Rockbridge County. Rockbridge County is in the Southern end of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. The three nearest towns are Lexington (19 miles), Buena Vista (24 miles), and Staunton (22 miles). Lexington is the home of two well-known colleges, Virginia Military Institute and Washington & Lee University. Buena Vista hosts Southern Virginia University and Staunton is the home of Mary Baldwin College.

Interstate Highways 81 and 64 provide easy access to major urban areas: Roanoke, VA (69 miles), Washington, DC (170 miles), Charlottesville, VA (52 miles), and Richmond, VA (120 miles).

Tourism is a major industry in the area. The Blue Ridge Parkway travels over 30 miles through eastern Rockbridge County. The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests have many hiking and horseback riding trails. The Virginia Horse Center is located in Lexington and attracts many horse enthusiasts to the area for horse shows and other events. VMI, the George C. Marshall Library, McCormick's Farm, and Lee Chapel, located at Washington and Lee University, are major attractions. The Museum of Frontier Culture, the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, and the American Shakespeare Theater are located in Staunton.

The demographics of the area show that the vast majority of the population in the immediate area (98 percent) is made up of white families, predominately married couples. About half of the people in the area are employed in white collar occupations; however, many of these also farm for a second income. The area also has a significant number of people who farm as their primary means of support.

The population of the immediate area is 1,500 people, living in 608 households. The area is growing and is expected to continue growing through the year 2013 at a rate faster than the national average. Average income is \$62,071, less than the national average of \$66,670. There is some poverty in the area, with 11.3 percent of the population making under \$15,000 per year. The area has been attractive to empty nesters and retirees, with a consistently growing population over age 55. The other group that is consistently growing in the area is that of singles and young families age 25-34. Median property values in the area are \$134,088, as compared to a national median of \$158,934. Understandably, nearly every family in the area owns a car, with a significant number, almost 30 percent owning three or more vehicles.

There have been many changes in the area over recent years: population growth, elimination of social/business institutions in Brownsburg and the surrounding area, and changes in work patterns to name a few. Small country schools and country stores no longer exist, forcing people to travel farther to shop. Many residents now

travel 15–30 miles to work. Some people now work on Sundays, and many two income families are now located in the area.

A significantly higher number of people in our area are strongly involved in their faith relative to the national average (45.9 percent as opposed to 35.4 percent). Other churches in the area include Fairfield Presbyterian Church, Fairfield United Methodist Church, New Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Asbury United Methodist Church, Old Providence Presbyterian Church, and Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church.

The families in the area tend to prefer a somewhat more traditional style of worship although they like an eclectic blend of music. Generally they contribute to the ongoing work of the church at an average level. They seek churches primarily for spiritual growth, Bible study, and prayer groups, although youth programs, family activities, and personal or family counseling needs are also very important to them.

## **NEW PROVIDENCE CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE**

New Providence is a rural church located in northern Rockbridge County, Virginia, three miles north of Brownsburg, near the Augusta County line.

Our current active membership is 231, composed of approximately 15 percent under age 25; 55 percent between the ages of 25 and 65; and 30 percent over age 65. As of December 31, 2008, average worship attendance was 101. Most of our members live within a 10 to 15 miles radius of the church, but some travel up to 25 miles.

We are a diverse congregation, with members employed in farming, business, and professional occupations, as well as homemakers and retirees. Ours is a caring and compassionate church family drawn together by the desire to worship God and serve Him in our community and throughout the world.

New Providence offers a variety of programs for everyone. There are Sunday School classes for all ages, Vacation Bible School, the LOGOS program, Youth Group, and Bible studies. We have an excellent music program featuring the adult choir, the handbell choir, and guest performances throughout the year. Special worship services include a Christmas Eve Candlelight service, Ash Wednesday service, community Holy Week services, and an Easter Sunrise service. There are three Presbyterian Women circles that meet monthly for Bible study and fellowship. Other opportunities for fun and fellowship include picnics and covered dish meals, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Breakfasts, Highnooners lunch group, First Sunday Fellowship time, softball team, golf tournament, Christmas Dinner and Play, and monthly nursing home visitation.

One of the strengths of our church is our active participation in mission programs at home and around the world. Locally we volunteer with Mission Next Door (a New Providence project that provides home repairs for our neighbors), Habitat for Humanity, the Valley Mission (homeless shelter in Staunton, Virginia), and King's Way Ministry (food pantry in Spottswood, Virginia). Members have gone on mission trips to West Virginia, Honduras, and Mexico, and four trips have been taken to Mississippi to volunteer with Hurricane Katrina relief. New Providence also supports a foreign missionary as part of our outreach program.

While the life and activities of New Providence honor our history and the traditions of our faith, we look forward with much excitement and enthusiasm to the challenges God is calling us to answer in this day and time. We eagerly anticipate fulfilling that call as God's family.

New Providence Presbyterian Church, Raphine, VA

Synod: Mid-Atlantic

Presbytery: Shenandoah

PIN# 23209

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Members	309	312	251	239	235	228	228	230	233	229	238	231
Females	169	170	140	131	127	125	127	123	128	126	132	135
Prof. Faith Gains < 17	6	3	0	8	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	5
Prof. Faith Gains > 18	3	3	1	2	3	5	11	7	2	2	8	8
Prof. Faith Losses	9	6	1	10	3	5	11	7	4	2	2	2
Certificate Gains	8	3	0	0	4	7	0	0	3	0	6	2
Other Gains	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Gains	17	9	1	10	7	12	11	7	7	2	14	7
Certificate Losses	5	3	12	1	5	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Deaths	6	3	6	5	5	4	5	4	2	6	4	1
Other Losses	1	0	44	16	1	14	5	0	2	0	0	12
Total Losses	12	6	62	22	11	19	11	5	4	6	5	4
Infant Baptisms	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	0	4	3	1	4
Adult Baptisms	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
Christian Education Enrollment	77	77	119	72	81	115	67	65	64	74	84	76
Inactives	44	44	86	102	102	107	106	101	102	100	96	110
Baptized Members	41	39	28	11	8	10	12	0	10	12	14	14
Adherents	394	395	365	352	345	345	346	331	345	341	348	355
Worship Attendance	124	122	106	102	114	118	108	103	112	114	113	101
Contributions (\$)	116,698.00	121,199.00	119,575.00	124,883.00	116,216.00	136,441.00	154,009.00	158,063.00	189,430.00	186,500.00	188,408.00	183,632.00
Building (\$)	36,223.00	35,500.00	60,100.00	19,000.00	9,900.00			40,280.00				
Requests (\$)		5,000.00							5,000.00			
Investment Income (\$)	8,360.00	7,980.00	20,603.00	24,352.00	11,174.00	14,305.00	23,389.00	12,544.00	69,058.00	16,400.00	16,660.00	44,313.00
Other Income (\$)	8,227.00	9,028.00	6,668.00	18,372.00	18,576.00	20,913.00	13,446.00	6,507.00	13,585.00	6,100.00	6,000.00	
Local Program (\$)	97,822.00	102,069.00	104,936.00	84,404.00	116,787.00	119,166.00	134,285.00	144,614.00	133,794.00	14,516.00	190,368.00	158,804.00
Local Mission (\$)	8,740.00	7,701.00	17,733.00	7,546.00	8,254.00	11,557.00	23,379.00	5,269.00	15,812.00	4,112.00	15,106.00	23,296.00
Capital Expenditures (\$)	50,755.00	17,856.00	67,478.00	32,957.00	9,900.00			32,619.00	61,813.00			37,664.00
Investment Expenditures (\$)											6.00	2,800.00
Per Capita Apportionment (\$)	2,524.00	2,195.00	2,231.00	2,309.00	2,392.00	2,342.00	2,475.00	2,873.00	2,886.00	2,925.00	3,200.00	3,400.00
Validated Mission (\$)	24,859.00	17,614.00	19,118.00	22,829.00	25,853.00	27,905.00	20,395.00	21,513.00	75,248.00	23,290.00	29,771.00	28,574.00
Other Mission (\$)		13,652.00	7,608.00	15,898.00		1,350.00	6,383.00	4,389.00	600.00			575.00
Per Member Contributions (\$)	377.66	388.46	476.39	522.52	494.54	598.43	675.48	687.23	813.00	814.41	791.63	687.46
Contrib. Per Worship Attendance (\$)	941.11	993.43	1,128.07	1,224.34	1,019.44	1,156.28	1,426.01	1,534.59	1,691.34	1,635.96	1,667.33	1,572.31

Note 1: Membership numbers and other statistics for congregations affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and one or more other denominations reflect only portions of the actual totals.

Note 2: Fields are blank when no data are reported.

\* Data for these lines come from Mission Support Services rather than from the Session Annual Statistical Report. Prepared by Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## **NEW PROVIDENCE VISION STATEMENT**

New Providence Presbyterian Church—serving  
God, our community, and the world

## **NEW PROVIDENCE MISSION STATEMENT**

New Providence Presbyterian Church is a congregation which accepts the Bible as the Word of God, acknowledging that Christ is the focal point of our lives. Building upon the rich historical heritage of our church, we are committed to carrying on Christ's mission in the world today. Therefore, we will:

- Worship together in gratitude and praise of God
- Share the love of God with others by continuing and strengthening our mission services to the community and the world
- Encourage individuals to grow in their personal spirituality by providing meaningful opportunities for study, discussion, and prayer
- Honor God by showing love, respect, and appreciation for each other
- Continue to be a loving and welcoming congregation

**MISSION STUDY –  
GOALS  
&  
OBJECTIVES**



## **We will worship together in gratitude and praise of God**

- We will continue to emphasize the centrality of the preaching and teaching of God's Word that it is biblically based and relevant to the world of today
- We affirm that the music program is a vibrant, uplifting part of worship
- We will encourage the use of new and diverse forms of worship and music in praise of God

**We will share the love of God with others  
by continuing and strengthening our mission  
services to the community and the world**

- We will continue to support the Mission Next Door projects with our talents and resources
- We will continue to support King's Way food pantry, Valley Mission homeless shelter, and Habitat for Humanity with our talents and resources
- We will actively support national and international disaster relief with our time and resources
- We will continue our financial, spiritual, and hands-on support of local, national, and international missions
- We will actively support other mission activities and remain open to where God leads

**We will encourage individuals to grow in their personal spirituality by providing meaningful opportunities for study, discussion, and prayer**

- We will continue to support LOGOS, Vacation Bible School, the Highnooners, Presbyterian Women, and youth groups
- We will expand opportunities for weekday and evening Bible studies
- We will explore the possibility of offering a LOGOS-like weeknight program that involves all members of the congregation
- We will encourage new ideas for increasing participation in Sunday School
- We will explore the development of prayer groups

## **We will honor God by showing love, respect, and appreciation for each other**

- We will provide opportunities for all members of the congregation to utilize their time, talents, and resources
- We will deliberately recruit new members and encourage less active members to share their time, talents, and resources
- We will provide recognition and thanks to all those who serve the church
- We will evaluate and perhaps reorganize our Undershepherd program to provide better care for our members
- We will provide more events for our members and guests to share fellowship with each other
- We will strengthen timely, open, and transparent communication between all members of the congregation
- We will encourage frank and constructive discussion as significant issues confront the congregation
- In all matters of controversy, we will remember that we need to seek not what we desire but what God wants

## **We will continue to be a loving and welcoming congregation**

- We will welcome and include all people into all congregational activities
- We shall establish a permanent Session-level committee that is responsible for encouraging our evangelism efforts
- We will emphasize evangelism and encourage leaders to attend evangelism conferences and training
- We will assess and improve the physical accessibility of our facilities
- We will assess and improve the visitor friendliness of church programs, activities, and facilities
- We will assess and improve our programs for young adults
- We will assess and improve our programs for empty nesters and recent retirees
- We will open our doors to community groups that wish to use our facilities