



The Home Page

First Presbyterian Church, Hastings, Nebraska 68901-5175
Vol. 19.44 November 22 - 29, 2015

Dear Fellow Companions of the Way,

On October 3rd, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln wrote a Thanksgiving Proclamation that has become the pattern for our annual 4th Thursday of November holiday. The words of Lincoln's proclamation evoke the spirit of his time and ours:

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God."

I am struck by Lincoln's phrase "*habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.*" It is a reminder that we too often take for granted the blessings of life and come to view them as entitlements. We see ourselves as good people, therefore we assume we are due good treatment from a providential God. But as we read further into Lincoln's 1863 proclamation, he makes plain that the nation is also called to repentance for its warring ways and "*perverseness and disobedience,*" imploring the nation not to forget those who have suffered the most, "*the widows and orphans.*" Lincoln's call to thanksgiving is neither blind to the nation's faults nor sentimental about the nation's good fortune in enjoying "*the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies.*"

At this Thanksgiving 2015, I cannot help but draw parallels to that honest call to repentance for our national "*perverseness*" while at the same time giving thanks for the blessings of a bountiful and good nation. There are certainly reasons to be dismayed by what happens or does not happen in public life today. Revelations about CIA drones involved in assassinations and civilian deaths called "*collateral damage,*" violence that tears communities apart, denial of climate change that is threatening our world, wars that seem to have no end, a generation of young men and women who have given their lives in wars for uncertain political motivations. There is much about which we should be concerned, much "*perverseness and disobedience*" to repent.

But as President Lincoln noted, this is also a time to give thanks for the tremendous good that is in this nation, the good and abundant blessings to which we become "*habitually insensible.*" For all the problems we face, we can still meet and overcome the challenges that face us. Thanksgiving can be a call to giving thanks for the

blessings of this nation. Our thanks to God, reminds us that we must work together as a nation until all people who are able to work can find meaningful work with a living wage, all people without shelter find housing, all who are sick receive proper medical care, and everyone in our world may live in peace. There is so much good for which to give thanks. And so much we have yet to do for what our reformed theology calls “the common good” so that all people may enjoy those blessings. A Blessed Thanksgiving!

Soli Deo Gloria!

Charlie

Charles Marshall Webster

Conversations that Matter: *Understanding the Syrian Refugee Crisis*

Complicated. Layered. Devastating. Deteriorating. The situation in Syria can be described in these and many other ways. Join us for an informative class beginning with a timeline of the crisis (from Logan Ellis, Hastings College student and FPC ministry intern), followed by reflections and Q&A on the political systems influencing the region by Dr. Ingrid Bego, Hastings College Political Science Professor.

Sunday, November 22, 9:15-10:15, Parlor.



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

<https://pda.pcusa.org/>

Heirs Apparent Class begins new DVD series

Looking for a way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas? Please consider joining the Heirs Apparent class on Sunday mornings at 9:15 in the Anderson Conference Room for a three-session DVD series entitled *The Purpose of Christmas*. Taught by Rick Warren, world-famous author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, this series looks at why we celebrate Christmas and how it can change our lives forever. (Classes in this series will be on Nov 22, Dec 6, and Dec 13.)

Please note: No Sunday School for any ages on November 29.

Committee Spotlight: *Christian Education Committee*

The Christian Education (or CE) Committee oversees the educational programming for all ages, birth - adult. This busy committee therefore is involved with Sunday School, Confirmation, Nursery, Vacation Bible School, the Christmas program, the Bid Board, Go & Serve trips, Wednesday Night Live, the library, Adopt-a-Student college outreach, Heirs Apparent class, and other special adult educational programming. Special upcoming events include the children's Christmas program, which will be during the 10:30 service on Dec. 13, and the Bid Board, which will be located in the Parlor, Nov. 29-Dec. 13. The CE Committee is grateful not only for the work of its staff representatives, Stephanie Brader and Kili Wenburg, but also for that of the *many* volunteers who keep all our educational programs going. THANK YOU, Volunteers!!! Please consider joining the CE Committee on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00. Current committee members include Kim Hermann, moderator, Matt Fong, Traci Boeve, Kenton Grams, Susie Graham, Ann Koozer, Nancy Grams, Stacey Eddleman, Kris Horton, Irina Erickson, and Jessica Bauer.

Want email notifications about opportunities for adults?

Kili will be sending out weekly-ish emails with notifications about church and community classes and events related to Christian Education and Spiritual Formation for adults. If you'd like to be added to this list, simply email Kili with your request: kili@fpchastings.org

Faithful Membership

Can we apply the same standard of faithfulness to our church activities that we expect in other areas of life? If your car starts one out of three days, do you consider it faithful? If a paper deliverer skips the Monday and Thursday editions, are they missed? If you miss a couple of mortgage payments in a year's time, does the loan company say, "Ten out of twelve isn't bad."

If you fail to worship God in Church one or two Sundays, would you be called faithful? If we expect faithfulness from others, what can God expect from us? - C.M.Webster

TRANSITIONAL NOTES No. 15

In my eighteen interim pastorates I have seen countless surveys online and off-line that describe what people want and do not want in a pastor. However, in my observation between the time of a new pastor's arrival and the end of the first year, many of the expectations will have changed. That will occur because of the newly installed pastor's adjustments to the new church and the congregation's response to her or him.

The best survey I have seen of what a congregation really wants in a new pastor suggests three simple questions:

One, Is the person in the pulpit the same person we experience at the coffee shop? Is he or she a person of integrity and compassion? Will she or he walk a rocky road with us?

Two, Does he or she really love us?

Three, Does he or she put Christ and the Church first in his or her life?

Now, reverse the questions and ask yourself: *Are you authentic and compassionate with your pastor? Do you really love your pastor? and Do you put Christ and the Church first in your life?* - C.M.W.

FPC DONTAED 8 BAGS (57 ITEMS) TO THE FOOD PANTRY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY OF NOVEMBER.

Theological Thoughts

God doesn't call the qualified – God qualifies the called. The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us. Give to God what is right – not what is left.

December 2015

Communion Servers - Team 1:

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Craig Balnicke | Kim Hermann | Erik Nielsen |
| Sharon Brooks | Chris Junker | Tim Redline |
| Linda Cooke | Al Meyer | Cindy Strasheim |
| Matt Fong | | |

Ushers

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Craig Balnicke | Linda Donohue | Susie Graham |
| Andrew Barrows | Jim Donohue | George Howard (captain) |

Greeters

Dec. 6: Kevin & Chris Junker
Dec. 13: Mike, Becky, Lydia, & Nina Meyer
Dec. 20: Pam Lay, Irene Jorgensen
Dec. 27: Jim, Kathy, Laura & Annie Duval

With the busy holiday season upon us, a quick note highlighting some dates when there will be NO Sunday School or WNL for Children and Youth:

NO WNL on November 25; December 23 & 30

NO Sunday School on November 29; December 27; and January 3

Troop 200 Boy Scouts will be available this Sunday, November 22, to rake leaves at your place of business or residence. Free-will donations are accepted. All proceeds will go to Healthy Beginnings to help a couple of young, struggling mothers through the holidays with care packages for mother & child(ren). If you are interested in helping the Scouts with this charitable service project, please contact Tom Kleinjan @ 402-705-0553 or email him at scouting200hastings@gmail.com.

Let's help them spread some cheer this season - your contribution makes the difference!

**Hanging of the Greens
will be on Saturday,
November 28th at 9am.
Everyone is welcome!
Snacks will be provided.**

*HASTINGS COLLEGE - A
FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS
AND CAROLS*

*TUESDAY, DECEMBER
FIRST, 2015*

*7:30PM AT FRENCH
MEMORIAL CHAPEL*

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

| | |
|---|------------|
| Tom & Molly Johnsen | 12/01/2001 |
| Charles & Margaret Hermes | 12/18/1965 |
| Willis & Jane Horton | 12/21/1973 |
| Robert Nedderman & Sue Medsker-Nedderman | 12/21/1975 |
| Chris & Inde Wissing | 12/21/2002 |
| Steve & Lin Jurgena | 12/27/1969 |
| Earl & Kathy Warriner | 12/31/1978 |

The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree in the Memorial Room supports clients of Assertive Community Treatments, people with severe and persistent mental illness and living in our community. Most are without family support and live on disability or nothing. Please help support these people by taking a tag from the tree and returning gifts to the tree by Sunday, December 20. The gifts should be wrapped and the tag placed back on them. Monetary donations may also be given.

Sponsored by the Memorial Committee.

COME JOIN US IN THE LIBRARY!

The library has several special collections for different seasons of the church year. We are coming up on Thanksgiving and there are some interesting books on the history of Thanksgiving, as well as some on the ways Thanksgiving is celebrated. Some are for adults and some are for children. We also have a DVD about the voyage of the Mayflower to the new world. The books are in the bookcase next to the door into the hallway by the kitchen and the DVD is in the DVD case on the east wall of the library.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

| | | | |
|-------|-------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| 12/01 | Peter Duang | 12/16 | Darson Stroyek |
| | Diane Phelps | 12/17 | Marilyn Nielsen |
| | Michelle Wells | | Lindsey Stout |
| 12/03 | Jeanne Hastings | 12/18 | Wayne Ganow |
| | Eva Ehrich | | Deb Jensen |
| | Justin Musgrave | | Shannon Welton |
| | Abigail Shetler | 12/19 | Sue Bradley |
| | Sandra Wimer | | Beulah Mapes |
| 12/04 | Conner Kidd | | Tom Ratzlaff |
| | Diane Mullen | | Zane Thomsen |
| 12/05 | Lula Buhr | | Kili Wenburg |
| | Tyson Kerr | 12/20 | Eleanor Jorgenson |
| | Carol Morris | | Bill Redinger |
| 12/06 | Connie Franzen | 12/21 | Matt Nieman |
| | Damon Nievas | | Justin Osborne |
| | Dave Rethorst | | Barbara Sunderman |
| 12/07 | Tanner Bauer | 12/22 | Jax Gernstein |
| | Ricki Frasier | 12/23 | John Harrington |
| | Lynette Krieger | 12/24 | Mari Anderson |
| 12/08 | Pam Schlichtman | | Shirley Johnston |
| | Steve Wolford | 12/25 | Tracy Brooks |
| 12/09 | Dave Dirks | | Emily Funkey |
| | Sophia Hemje | 12/26 | Lisa Marvel |
| 12/11 | Kevin Ellerbee | | Sophia Pankratz |
| | Phyllis Salyards | | Laura Marvel Wunderlich |
| | Chima Uche | 12/27 | Margaret Koontz |
| | Danna Wolford | 12/28 | Jim Cooke |
| 12/12 | Traci Boeve | | Thomas Cooke |
| | John Brooks | | Jim Wenburg |
| | Gail Schmidt | | Rogene Wenburg |
| 12/13 | Nyaguor Duang | 12/29 | Landon Benorden |
| | Mark Scheidegger | | Indiana Hoff |
| 12/14 | Mary Fisk | | Connie Kubicka |
| | Darrel Lloyd | | Carolyn Nowka |
| 12/15 | Kelly Barnett | 12/30 | Levi McCoy |
| | Deegan Dettwiller | | Al Meyer |
| | Pat Kleiber | | Laura Peterson |
| | Nnamdi Uche | | Riley Propp |
| | Nnenna Uche | | |

Dates of Interest

November

25--No WNL

29--No Sunday School

29--Praise and Alleluia Bells & Choir sing at 10:30am service

December

6--Christmas program rehearsal during Sunday School hour

12--Christmas program dress rehearsal 9:30am-11:30am in sanctuary

13--Christmas Program during 10:30am worship service. Rehearsal during Sunday School hour.

16--Jr. High bowling party rescheduled from 12/2 (no Sr. High)

20--Cal/West Bells play 10:30am service

23--No WNL

27--No Sunday School

30--No WNL

January

3--No Sunday School

Children & Youth age 2 1/2* thru 18 please join us for Sunday School!

Sundays 9:15am -- 10:15am

*We ask that children be potty trained before they attend.



Acolyte Schedule

November 22: Eleanor Oliver & Shannon Canady
November 29: Campbell Schukei & Jack Howe
December 6: Alexandra Ferguson & Claire Schwarz
December 13: Tethloach Duang & Tristan Propp
December 20: Jonah Snell & Selah Wenburg
December 27: Allie Bauer & Lily Black

Youth Usher Schedule

November 22: Jennifer Boeve & Maggie Nielsen
November 29: Arich Fruehling & Josh Brooks
December 6: Julia Reimer & Lily Kingsley
December 13: Morgan Karloff & Sam Reimer
December 20: Courtney Junker & Nyanhial Duang
December 27: Lucy Nielsen & Lydia Meyer



Join us on Wednesdays for Wednesday Night Live!!!

Activities include Recreation Play, Worship Skills (bells/choir), Bible Study, and Family Time Meal.

Age 4 thru 5th Grade:
4:00pm - 6:45pm
6th thru 12th Grade:

Attendance

| Date | Teachers | Children/Youth |
|------------|----------|----------------|
| Wed. 10/21 | 15 | 62 |
| Sun. 10/25 | 14 | 59 |
| Wed. 10/28 | 14 | 57 |
| Sun. 11/1 | 12 | 65 |
| Wed. 11/4 | 13 | 56 |
| Sun. 11/8 | 16 | 59 |
| Wed. 11/11 | 13 | 51 |
| Sun. 11/15 | 11 | 61 |

Christmas Program

The children and youth (PreK-12th Grade) will be leading worship on December 13 with the Christmas program. The program cast has been announced. Rehearsals have begun for speaking parts and all others will be starting to rehearse on Sunday, December 6, during the Sunday School hour!

Dress Rehearsal: December 12
9:30am to 11:30am
in the Sanctuary

BID BOARD BEGINS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29th AND CLOSSES SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY STOPPING IN THE PARLOR
DONATIONS ARE STILL BEING ACCEPTED

GO AND SERVE BID BOARD

Supporting the Go and Serve Mission Trip for June 2016. An essential part of the Bid Board process is the generous donations and support from YOU, the congregation. If you would like to donate an item or service for the 2016 Bid Board fundraiser, complete the following form and return it with the item to the church office as soon as possible.

I am donating the following items: _____

Donated by: _____ Phone: _____

Please be sure items are in new to like-new condition.

The Bid Board will be open November 29 – December 13, 2015.

Past donations have included: baked goods, centerpieces, lawn services, gift certificates, glass work, autographed items, quilts, note cards, candles, art work, wreathes, child care, sermons, snow removal, tutoring, babysitting, tickets to events, jewelry, bead work, et.al.

Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

Thanks be to God

Thanks to all who have returned pledge cards for 2016. Pledges are continuing to be received and welcomed.

If you have questions or would like to know the details of FPC Hastings money collected, remitted, or expensed, feel free to call or come into the office to discuss. You are always welcome!

POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias may be purchased in honor or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$10. Please return this order form to the church office.

Poinsettia in memory of: _____

Poinsettia in honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Home Page
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The Home Page

A publication of
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Hastings, NE 68901

Transitional Pastor
Rev. Charles M. Webster

Publishing Guidelines:

The *Home Page* is a weekly publication for the people and mission of First Presbyterian Church.

The newsletter seeks to inform, instruct and challenge its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC.

Articles will be accepted on Monday of each week. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability. You may send articles to the church office: tarci@fpchastings.org or call 402-462-5147.

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Holiday Schedule:

December 6

December 13

December 20-27