



The Home Page

First Presbyterian Church, Hastings, Nebraska 68901-5175
Vol. 19.37 October 4, 2015

Dear Fellow Companions of the Way,

In the past week I hope you heard and saw some of Pope Francis' visit to the U.S., including what I would call an excellent sermon before the Congress and an outstanding address to the general assembly of the U.N. As he often spoke of "the common good," Presbyterians were hearing echoes of John Calvin and reformed theology. Francis is calling every one of us (liberals and conservatives) out of complacency. That the Gospel of Jesus Christ is radical may take many people aback – and challenge our assumptions of what the Church is here to do. I appreciate Francis' courageous voice on climate change, immigration, militarism and the arms trade, the death penalty, and poverty. I admire his visiting with homeless people, car-washers, day laborers, immigrant children who have crossed the border without their parents, and prisoners in jail. His ministry is right out of the Gospel that says of Jesus: "to the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, to prisoners freedom, and to those in sorrow joy."

In my transitional role in preparing for the next called pastor, I have sometimes heard the question, "Does politics belong in the pulpit?" I would argue that is the wrong question! The question I would ask is whether the preacher "believes the gospel has anything to say to politics and social justice, economics and business and labor, care of the earth, war and peace, the arts and sciences, family life, sexuality, and human relationships?" Sometimes I think we quarantine the gospel, keep it locked up in church, and held in check at the doors that face out on the world as if the gospel had no relevance at work, at home, in business relationships, or international affairs, and most certainly in politics or issues of social justice. In reformed theology God is sovereign and ruler over all those elements of human life and will not be prevented from laying claim to it all. The church needs ministers and leaders who can connect the dots from the Bible to the front page of the newspaper, presenting the larger claims of the cross and resurrection, and subject to the Apostle Paul's admonition: *"I solemnly urge you to proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when the people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth."* (2 Timothy 4:2-4a)

Soli Deo Gloria!

Charlie

Charles Marshall Webster

WORLD COMMUNION/PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS SUNDAY

The invitation is intensely personal. It is delivered individually and by name, as if you were the only person on the guest list. The language is intimate. It reads:

"I know you better than anyone else in the world. I know you better than you know yourself. I know all your secrets, the good and the bad. I know your loneliness, I know your pain, I know your fears and frustrations, your hopes and dreams. I know you exactly as you are, and I cherish your personal friendship more than you can possibly imagine. Be my guest. Mi casa es tu casa. Let us break bread together and share a glass of wine. All that I have is yours. Accept my love. Accept my forgiveness for all the broken things. Accept my life. Accept my peace. I am with you. I am for you. I want you whole. I want you free and joyous."

The invitation is signed, **Jesus Christ**. In the lower left corner are the initials R.S.V.P. which stand for "repondez s'il vous plait," and that translates: Please respond! Please respond to this personal invitation to the celebration of the love of God in Jesus Christ, **World Communion/Peace and Global Witness Sunday, October 4th.** – CMW

COME JOIN US IN THE LIBRARY!

Books and movies have a strong relationship. Sometimes that book is what you remember and love and sometimes it is the movie. The church library has many books that have been made into movies. The following is a list of some of them:

- A Walk In The Woods
- The Lord of the Rings trilogy
- The Hobbit
- Timepiece
- The Christmas Box
- Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
- The Narnia series
- The Little House on the Prairie series (I know, this was TV, not a movie)

The library also has some of these movies and also movies that were made about Bible stories. Check them out from the video case on the east wall of the library.

– Sue Medsker-Nedderman

Fair Trade-focused Adult Mission/Learning Trip to Nicaragua

Twelve Presbyterians from across the U.S. will travel together to Nicaragua January 23-30, 2016, to experience the benefits of Fair Trade first-hand, and you could be one of them! The trip will include meeting Fair Trade farmers and artisans, picking coffee and staying in the homes of farming families, meeting the women who sew sweat-free T-shirts, and generally deepening in knowledge of and commitment to global discipleship. Applications are being accepted now through October 23. Contact Kili in the church office for an application.

Conversations that Matter, October 4: Justice and Mercy

Fellowship Hall, 9:15-10:15.

Through scripture, we know that our God is both a God of justice and a God of mercy. How are Christians to balance these values, particularly with regard to the death penalty? Panelists exploring this question will be: Senator Les Seiler; Teresa Luther, district court judge; and Wayne Ganow, prison ministry volunteer.

October 4 is Hastings College Sunday. With an extra-festive worship service and special guest speakers during our Sunday School hour, this would be a great day to invite a friend or neighbor!!

Conversations that Matter, October 11 & 18: Love and Marriage

Parlor, 9:15-10:15

Our LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) neighbors, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, selves have long wondered how they fit into society and church. For decades now, debate has swirled over whether to include or exclude these individuals from institutions ranging from marriage to ministry to parenthood. People of faith and prayer have sometimes taken one side, sometimes another, and sometimes have been too uncertain to take a stance either way. Through scripture study and personal sharing, we will look at this important topic on two Sundays (plus a mid-week documentary showing and discussion).

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### **OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH**

ALTHOUGH PASTORS AND THEIR FAMILIES SHOULD BE APPRECIATED ALL DAYS AND MONTHS OF THE YEAR, OCTOBER IS TRADITIONALLY A TIME WE SAY THANKS. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU TOLD YOUR PASTOR YOU WERE PRAYING FOR HIM/HER? WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU EXPRESSED THANKS FOR YOUR PASTORS?

#### **A few words of appreciation from our staff...**

*"Your wisdom and guidance continue to be incredibly helpful and truly inspirational! Thank you for your kindness, support, and all that you do!"*

*"From the beginning of his time here, Pastor Charlie has believed in me and encouraged me to share with the church my passion for spiritual growth. I will be forever indebted to him for giving me the opportunity to do this work that I love!"*

*"Pastor Charlie was on the top of the list of those encouraging me to take on my role here at First Presbyterian Church, Hastings. His faith in me to bring good things and compassion to our children and youth has inspired me. Thank you, Pastor, for being interested in what I want to do, and for encouraging me to explore new ideas. I will forever be grateful for this opportunity!"*

*"Pastor Charlie, thank you so much for helping this congregation through the past year. Anytime a church is in a time of transition, it is nice to have a pastor who can bring experience and compassion to the members of our church family. Your wisdom and guidance are appreciated."*

--Rich Portwood, Chair of Personnel Committee

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Taize Worship is Coming Back!!

Join us the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel for a unique contemplative, prayerful, candlelit worship experience. October's theme will be "Forgiveness." Music will be led by Karli Cabrera.

Mariners Husker Party

Hilarie and Tim Redline are hosting a Husker party for the Mariners at their house, 5716 Haymeadow Ridge, this Saturday (October 3) at 2:30, to watch the Husker football team take on Illinois. This will be a great opportunity to leave the kids with a sitter and hang out with your First Presbyterian friends! All young adults of the church are invited--men and women--but please give the Redlines a call ([402-462-9213](tel:402-462-9213)) if you're planning to come so they know how many to plan for. Go Huskers!



***Red Cross Blood
Mobile October 15
noon to 6 p.m. in
Fellowship Hall. Call
Erika Brooks for more
information or to make
an appointment 402-
469-9285***

Irene Smidt, now of Fairbury, celebrated her 96th birthday on Sept. 14 and enjoyed having her family with her. Irene was a long-time member of First Presbyterian. Irene's daughter-in-law, Evelyn Smidt, says Irene would welcome cards or letters.

Irene's address is:
Heritage Care Center
P.O. Box 667
Fairbury, NE 68352.

**Youth Ushers will be included to the 10:30am
worship service beginning October 4, 2015.**

Come join us at 7:00am Wednesday mornings in the Parlor for Breakfast Bible Study. Everyone is welcome.

The Deacons are forming teams of individuals who can assist with refreshments during the fellowship time following funerals.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering for any or all of the following:

- preparing salads or desserts
- coordinating luncheons
- serving at luncheons
- helping with clean-up

Contact Pat Kern or Rogene Wenburg to be included in the calling list of volunteers

Hastings CROP Hunger Walk or Run is sponsored by the local Church Women United with help from Hastings College to include a 5k Run. The walk/run event will start at Hazelrigg Student Union and will be in the College and Heartwell Park area Sunday, October 18, 2015, **1:30 to run, 2:00 to walk.**

CROP Hunger Walks began in 1947 under the wing of Church World Services and for many years has raised funds to help provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs both locally and globally. 25% of our Hastings Walk fundraiser will be used locally to benefit our Hastings Open Table. First Presbyterian Church in Hastings has a team in this event. Please join our team as you donate to this much needed fundraiser. A table is in the Memorial room each Sunday until October 18 for your donations and will inform you of the walk/run event, or you can donate in the church office. To donate online go to crophungerwalk.org, find Hastings Crop Hunger Walk, Register, Join a team, 1st Presbyterian Church or start your own team. Follow the simple step-by-step instructions.

Join in on the fun. Plan to walk and donate, or run the 5k run, \$30 registration fee, t-shirt included and prizes to the first three runners. If you can't join us, or don't know if you are able, donations are so much appreciated. Thank you, Susie Graham [402-469-2638](tel:402-469-2638)

Congregational Lives

September 28, 2015

Congratulations to Wyatt and Jessie Weber on the birth of their baby, Quinn Alice Weber. The happy family lives in Sioux City, Iowa. Wyatt is the son of Shanda Spurgeon and Paul Weber and step-son of Tom Kreager, Hastings College Professor of Art.

Linda and Chris Petroff were our hiking partners at Bear Lake, CO as we celebrated our retirements. They want to share contact information for those who would like to stay in touch or stop by for a visit: 14921 Williams Street, Thornton, CO 80602. 402.469.8281 Linda lindapetroff@yahoo.com or 402.469.9103 Chris clpetroff@yahoo.com. They are spending retirement as VBG's (Very Busy Grandparents) and loving every minute of it.

Nick Hoff is the opening act for Jeff Foxworthy, and Larry the Cable Guy on a twelve-city tour this fall. He will be at the Baxter Arena in Omaha on December 4th (go to nickhoff.com and click on tour to view the dates and locations of the tour). Nick will also be performing at the Funny Bone Comedy Club in Omaha on December 26, 27, 30, 31 and January 2nd. He is the son of Neal and Susan Hoff, and brother of Leah Ratzlaff, and Laura Hoff Little.

At the first ever Hastings High School Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremony, Doug Phelps was honored for being the first Nebraskan ever to clear 7' in the high jump. Many of his other noteworthy athletic accomplishments were mentioned at the ceremony, and Doug gave a lovely, humble acceptance speech.

Also at the HHS Hall of Fame induction ceremony, three great sports teams were honored. On these teams were First Presbyterians Cal Johnson and Dick Kleiber (1954 Class A State Basketball Championship team) and Justin Osborne (1993 Class A State Football Championship team and 1994 Class B State Football Championship team).

We invite you to share your joys with the church family by emailing Cindy Strasheim, cstrasheim@windstream.net or call the church office [402.462.5147](tel:402.462.5147).

You are invited for supper and program Friday night, October 16th at 6:00p.m. in Fellowship Hall, hosted by Pastor Emeritus Bill and Janie Nottage-Tacey and Transitional Pastor Charlie and Mimi Webster. Our guests will include Jan Dus, Executive Director of Diakonia, of our sister denomination the *Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren*. Current projects of Diakonia are Agriculture Development, Empowering Women, Humanitarian Aid and Social Service. **Come and bring your entire family** to hear what the Church is doing in Eastern Europe, East Africa, and Southeast Asia. Food and beverages will be provided at no cost. Bring a dessert to share if you like. ***R.S.V.P. to the Church office no later than Wednesday, October 14th.*** We look forward to seeing you there!

Home Page
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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.

***Sunday Service
Worship Greeters
are needed***

***Please call or email
the office
to confirm
your dates of availability***

Thank you!