

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GREG ALLEN-PICKETT, SENIOR PASTOR

DAMEN JENSEN-HEITMANN, ASSOCIATE PASTOR

HOME PAGE



Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

If you did not have a chance to see this article from the Hastings Tribune, December 21, I want to share it with you now. This article, so well written by Andy Raun, clearly articulates to me what it means to be a Presbyterian.

In a conversation I had with Andy thanking him for this article, Andy said to me, "Presbyterians are good with their words". Andy is right, we Presbyterians are good with our words as evidenced by the prayers in our Advent Devotional Guide. But even more importantly, Presbyterians are great at putting their words into action. This year's Reverse Advent is a clear representation and a tangible display of just that. "A Work of Hope" not only gave us devotionals and prayers to fill our own hearts, but it also gave us an opportunity to put our HOPE into action by gathering items with the intention of bringing HOPE into the lives of others in our community.

The outpouring of love is clearly evident when you glance into the Parlor and see the tables overflowing with donations. From the very first day the advent devotional came out, our front doors have been revolving with members bringing in items day after day after day. Your actions give me, our church staff, and the community of Hastings HOPE that there is good in the world and that we are faithfully following our call to tangibly share the love of Christ with our neighbors and our strangers.

From the bottom of my heart I want to thank you for your participation in the work of hope that we do at First Presbyterian Church of Hastings. We will end 2021 on a high note and start 2022 overflowing with faith, hope and love.

Your Servant in Christ,
Pastor Greg



AMY ROH/Tribune

Constance Malloy organizes donations made at First Presbyterian Church Dec. 14.

‘The Work of Hope’

LOCAL CONGREGATION
PROMOTES DAILY PRAYER,
WORKS OF CHARITY DURING
ADVENT SEASON

ANDY RAUN

aroun@hastingstribune.com

At this time in history, when the pre-Christmas push often overruns Thanksgiving and the entire month of December, the distinct meaning of the Christian season of Advent may get lost in the shuffle for many believers.

At First Presbyterian Church in Hastings, a “reverse Advent calendar” project now in its third year helps congregation members to remember the four weeks leading up to Christmas Day are less for decking the halls than for clearing the decks.

This year’s reverse Advent calendar is titled “The Work of Hope.” The calendar takes the form of a devotional booklet with a weekly meditation for each of the four weeks of Advent and then a daily prayer written by an individual or group from the congregation.

The devotional guide encourages church members to prepare for Christmas by serving others in need, letting go of worry and loosening their attachment to material things, and thereby making room in their lives for the joy of knowing Jesus Christ.

“Dear Advent Pilgrim,” writes the Rev. Damen Jensen-Heitmann, associate pastor of First Presbyterian, in the introduction to this year’s guide. “Few people know this, but once upon a time, Advent was much more like Lent. It was a season of repentance and restoration during which one would prepare for the coming of the Christ child not by adorning the hallways and wrapping presents but by clearing space within their hearts and reorienting their lives toward God.”

The Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett, senior pastor, said the Advent calendar is “reverse” in the sense that, instead of getting a treat each day leading up to Christmas, users are encouraged to do a kind deed for someone else by donating a designated item.

“As a kid I used to have an Advent calendar that had chocolates in it,” he said. “I remember the excitement, the hope and the anticipation associated with that. But the other side of Advent is preparation. We have to try to be like Christ, and one way to do that is to think of the needs of others.”

Allen-Pickett said the idea for the reverse calendar had been forwarded to him by someone from social media.

“I forwarded it to our missions committee, and they embraced the idea and thought it was great,” he said.

The missions committee then contacted several local organizations with which the congregation partners to develop a list of items calendar users could be invited to donate.

The 27 items on the list include everything from baby bottles, wipes and diapers to kitchen cleaners, dish cloths and laundry detergent.

The list also includes some food items. For instance, the suggested donation for

SEE HOPE/page A3

Hope: Congregation promotes daily prayer, acts of charity during Advent

Continued from page A1

Christmas Eve is boxed macaroni and cheese.

Jensen-Heitmann, the associate pastor, took charge of putting together the devotional guide and called on different individuals and groups to write the daily prayers.

While Allen-Pickett, Jensen-Heitmann and other staff members wrote their share of the entries, so did individual church members and groups such as Heirs Apparent, an adult Bible study and fellowship group; the Tuesday Bible Study; and the middle school youth group.

Allen-Pickett said the prayer-writing experience had been meaningful for many participants, whether they worked alone or in groups, and produced some stunning reflections.

"Group-writing a prayer is an interesting process, but it's been a fun experience to learn to do that," he said.

Copies of the booklet were mailed to all households in the church, and it was made available in digital form through the congregation's website. Extra hard copies also were kept on hand at the church.

The project has been warmly received by members of the congregation, and significant numbers have chosen to become involved, Al-

len-Pickett said.

"We hear pretty clearly from the people of the church that this is a wonderful resource for them in the season of Advent," he said. "It unites us as a family of faith."

While the church wasn't open for in-person worship during Advent 2020 because of the novel coronavirus disease, COVID-19, pandemic, the reverse calendar project went forward, anyway, Allen-Pickett said — and was "a beautiful thing" in such a challenging time because of the way it joined congregation members in both prayer and service.

In 2020, donations for the needy included, to name just a few, 63 containers of spaghetti sauce, 2,462 diapers, 50 bags of cough drops, 140 rolls of paper towels and 80 tubes of toothpaste.

"This year, (the volume of donations) is probably going to be even more significant," Allen-Pickett said.

Donations for 2021 are going to the Hastings High School Food Pantry, Catholic Social Services, Crossroads Mission Avenue, and the enCourage Advocacy Center. The items will be transferred to those agencies during January 2022.

Allen-Pickett said it's rewarding to be able to deliver the donations and see the result of Christians putting

their beliefs into action, doing "The Work of Hope."

"Hope is not a passive thing," he said. "It's an active thing we work for as a people of faith. The reverse Advent calendar provides us a tangible way to do that."

The daily prayer for this Wednesday, Dec. 22, written by church member Jennifer Boeve, seems to summarize the project well:

"Gracious God, give us the humility to remember that we are both the lowly and the rich in various areas of our lives. While your Word is a source of hope at our lowest points, help us to remember that we are more often the rich that need to be emptied. Help us to empty ourselves of our status, our pride, our self-image, our money, and all other things that distract us from our purpose of bearing the image of your hope in our world. Give us the courage to endure the discomfort that comes with doing the work of hope. Remind us that carrying, sustaining and growing your hope means not only loving those whom we already love but loving those who need our love most. Amen."

Allen-Pickett encourages other congregations in search of a meaningful Advent project to consider a "reverse" calendar. For more information visit www.fpchastings.org.

The Work of Hope 2021



ONE GOOD THING ABOUT A BELATED BIRTHDAY
IS THAT IT LASTS JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER

If you see these awesome kids, please wish them a
"Happy Belated Birthday"

Halligan Little 12/27

Maliya Fitzgerald 12/30

Sophia Hemje 12/9

Esther Allen-Pickett 12/17

Skylynn Norris 12/19

Madilyn Graves 12/7

Briella Borrell 12/23

Riley Propp 12/30



HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Caleb Schukei 1/15

Mike Karloff 1/16

Ann Koozer 1/16

Rich McKenzie 1/17

Kathy Reimer 1/18

Kathy Illingworth 1/19

Barry Thomson 1/22

Jim Duval 1/1

Georgie Evans 1/1

Duane Ochsner 1/4

Dan Zabloudil 1/4

Carla Fike 1/5

Linda Carllson 1/6

Paul Krieger 1/6

June Nielsen 1/6

Brady Rhodes 1/6

Harper Launchbaugh 1/9

Robert Nedderman 1/7

Dora Horsley 1/11

Robin Koozer 1/11

Dale Behrens 1/14

Bob Johnson 1/14

Maddux Pumroy 1/14

Marie Rasmussen 1/14

Nancy Grams 1/22

Melissa Davis 1/24

Morgan Karloff 1/25

Erica Brooks 1/28

Jessica Meeske 1/28

Javae Redinger 1/30

Gaylon Hermann 1/30

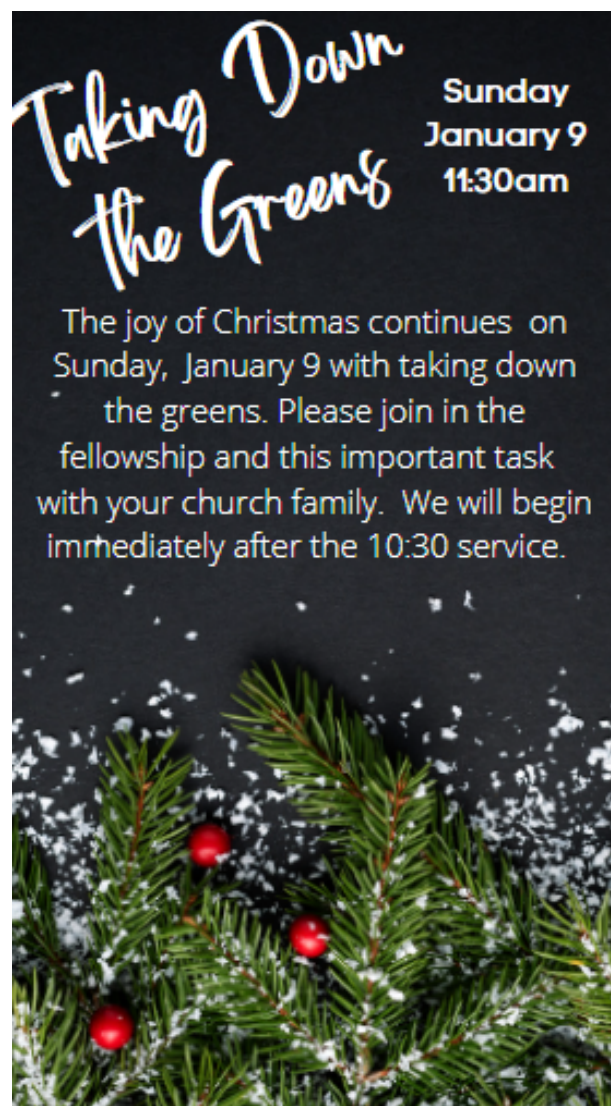


Happy Wedding Anniversary

Kim & Gaylon Hermann
1/17/1986

Stacy & Neil Kerr
1/2/1999

Verna & Dean Meyer
1/30/1954





Our vision is to live in communities where behavioral health is essential to well-being and stigma has been eliminated.

Prayers for

Mary Lewis
Lois Hafer
Bev Stein
Greg Howard
Rachael Lay
Frank Georgiana
Tommy Thomsen
Carl Utley
Shirley Gass
Brad Davis
Elaine Schumacher
Melba Trehern
Chris Wheeler
Dr. Rev. Cheryl Ann Elfond
Pam & Don Canady
Tut Ruei Family
Rich Portwood
Michael Hahne
Joan Shaw
Barry Thomson



In Memory of

Joyce Harrenstein
11/27/2021

Mary Lee Phelps
12/14/2021

Katherine Sachtleben
12/14/2021

Thank you for the
beautiful
poinsettia and
card you brought
to me, it is
absolutely
beautiful!

-Eleanor Jorgenson



THANK YOU

Thank you, **Ginny Locke,**
Alice Throckmorton and
Lynne Friedewald
for coming in every Tuesday
to help put together the
bulletin and
Home Page mailings.

CHRISTMAS EVE
WORSHIP
ATTENDANCE



IN PERSON: COLLEGE VIEW 40
230 AT 5:30
156 AT 7:30
32 AT 11:00

ONLINE: 39 AT 5:30
60 AT 7:30
37 AT 11:00

594

12/27 thru 12/31	Monday-Friday	<i>Church Office Closed</i>	<i>No Activities</i>
1/2/2022	8:30a-9:15a	Informal Worship	Sanctuary
<i>Happy New Year!</i>		<i>No Sunday School</i>	
<i>Baptism</i>	10:00a-10:30a	HAW Store Open	Narthex/Memorial
	10:30a-11:30a	Traditional Service	Sanctuary
	11:30a-12:00p	HAW Store Open	Narthex/Memorial
MON 1/3	8:30a-10:00a	Walkers/Walkers Coffee (M-TH)	PEACE Gym/NW Classroom
	1:00p-3:00p	First Pres Pickleball Open Gym	PEACE Gym
	2:00p-3:30p	Hearts & Hands Meal Packing	PEACE Center
	7:00p-8:00p	Boy Scouts	Scout Room
TUES 1/4	10:30a-11:30a	Staff Meeting	Zoom
	12:00p-1:00p	Bible Study with Pastor Greg	Anderson/Zoom
	5:30p-7:00p	WAM	Fellowship Hall
	5:30p-6:30p	United Harvest Board Meeting	PEACE NW Classroom
	6:00p-8:00p	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
WED 1/5	12:00p-1:00p	Noonday Bible Study with Dan	Zoom
	12:00p-1:00p	PW Coordinating Team Meeting	Library
	1:00p-2:00p	PW Program	Fellowship Hall
	2:00p-3:30p	Hearts & Hands Meal Packing	PEACE Center
	4:00p-6:45p	WNL starts back up!	Fellowship Hall Check-In
	6:00p-6:45p	Family Meal Time	Fellowship Hall
	6:20p-6:50p	Cal/West Bell Choir Rehearsal	Bell Room
	6:50p-7:30p	Cal/West Choir Rehearsal	TBD
	7:30p-8:30p	6 th -12 th Youth Group	Youth Group Room
	6:45p-7:30p	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
	7:30p-8:15p	Chancel Bell Rehearsal	Bell Room
	6:30p-7:30p	First Pres Pickleball Open Gym	PEACE Gym
	6:30p-9:00p	Wood Carvers	Church Lower-Level
THURS 1/6	5:30p-6:30p	Christian Ed Meeting	TBD
	6:00p-8:00p	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6:00p-8:00p	Mexican Folkloric Dance Class	Peace NE Classroom
	7:00p-8:00p	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
FRI 1/7	10:00a-12:00p	Mahjong Ladies	Church Room 111
SUN 1/9	8:30a-9:15a	Taize Worship	Sanctuary
	9:15a-10:15a	Sunday School	Various Locations
	10:00a-10:30a	HAW Store Open	Narthex/Memorial
	10:30a-11:30a	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary
	11:30a-12:00p	HAW Store Open	Narthex/Memorial
	11:30a- done	Taking Down the Greens	Memorial Room

First Presbyterian Church of Hastings
Sharing the love of Christ in the heart of Hastings since 1873

Head of Church: Jesus Christ
Senior Pastor: Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett
Director of Children & Family Parish
Ministries: Rose Koepf
Organist and Music Coordinator: Linda Vollweiler
Calvin/Westminster Choir Director: Linda Johnson
Praise/Alleluia Choir Directors: Teresa & Tim Canady
Praise/Alleluia Bells Choir Director: Dr. Susan Oliver
Accompanist: Mary Plock
Scholar in Residence: Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh

Ministers: Members of the Church
Associate Pastor: Rev. Damen Jensen-Heitmann
Associate: Kili Wenburg
Bookkeeper: Deb Hamburger
Chancel Choir Director: Dr. Robin Koozer
Chancel Bells & Calvin/Westminster Bells Director: Dr. Byron Jensen
Church Office Administrator: Sarah Allen
Facilities Manager: Tony Calhoun
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Bill Nottage-Tacey

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Hastings, NE 68901
402-462-5147
fpc@fpchastings.org

Return Service Requested

Mail To:

FORUM

Interrupting Violence - Jan 16 & 23

Reflections from a Hospice Chaplain - Jan 30, Feb 6 & 13

*Lenten Learnings with Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh - Feb 27
March 20 & 27, April 3 & 10*

*Ecology & Theology with Dr. Dorothy Dean - April 24
May 1 & 8*

*Forum Series
Spring 2021*

