



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

# Home Page Newsletter

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

On Sunday, January 26, we had a glorious worship service. The music was led by our amazing organist, Linda Vollweiler, and our children's choirs and children's handbell choirs. The children's handbell choir, under the direction of Dr. Susan Oliver, wrote an original handbell piece that they played as part of the worship service; it was incredible! If you missed it, we have created a video of the children playing bells that can watch here: <https://youtu.be/Oxvdo4r1NLs>

We had a "full house" in worship with more than 200 people participating in person (including more than 30 children and youth!) and another 100 streaming the service online. It is a joy to lead a church with a multi-generational and vibrant congregation that gathers to worship God and share fellowship.

Following worship we held our annual congregational meeting. At the meeting the congregation reviews and discusses the life and ministry of the church over the past year. It serves as an opportunity for transparency, accountability, and shared decision-making, reflecting our Presbyterian governance principles. It fulfills the requirements of the church's constitution, The Book of Order, and provides a space for members to participate in important decisions. Just as importantly, it strengthens the congregation's connection to the mission and operations of the church.

This year we shared a lot of good news:

- We added 19 new members in 2024. In the last eight years we have added 165 new members to the church!
- Our attendance continues to remain strong averaging 275 people each Sunday in-person and online. I noted that in a town of 25,000, that means that more than 1 out of every 100 residents of Hastings is attending worship with us on Sunday mornings.
- The church ended the year with an \$80,000 budget surplus thanks to the generosity of our members, good budget management by our staff, and an unexpected gift from outside the church of \$30,000. We have put the surplus in an account to offset expected health and property insurance increases. Pledges for 2025 are also up.
- I shared a report on the capital campaign. More than 75% of the projects in the church and 50% of the projects in the PEACE Center are completed. Of the \$2.25million pledged over three years, we have already received more than \$1.7million.

*Continued*

- We elected new church officers, with many of them serving a second term. This is a sign of health for a church when church officers are willing to continue serving.

These are just a few highlights of the “trackable metrics” of church vitality. There are many intangible metrics that also point to the health of our church. In the “State of the Church” address, I shared highlights from the annual report and the incredible work of our committees and volunteers. I was deeply moved as I read through the annual report this year. The pages of our annual report tell a love story. It is a love story of God’s love for us, and a love story of our love for God and our love for our neighbors. We are a church that lives out our vision of sharing the love of Christ from the heart of Hastings and embraces our mission of welcoming all, living love, and transforming lives. As you turn through the pages and read about all the ministry and mission that our church has done within our walls with our own members, outside our walls in the Hastings Community, and around the world, all of it is based in love. The annual report is a compelling and beautiful love story about God’s love manifest through this family of faith. If you haven’t already read the annual report, I commend it to you. If you didn’t get a copy on Sunday, you can stop by the church office to pick one up or you can download it and read it at this link: <https://fpchastings.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Annual-Report-FINAL.pdf>

If you missed the annual congregational meeting, you can watch a video of it on YouTube at this link: <https://youtu.be/uW4Oyz-3bFo>

I am deeply grateful to this congregation, and the annual meeting provides me an opportunity to reflect on that gratitude. You all inspire me as a disciple of Jesus Christ through your incredible commitment to God and the work that God is doing through First Presbyterian Church of Hastings. I give thanks to God for this family of faith and the opportunity I have to serve as your pastor and work together with you to help build God’s kingdom of love, justice, mercy, and peace. I look forward to the coming year as we continue to share the love of Christ from the heart of Hastings!

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Greg".

Pastor Greg

# Ushers and Greeters

**February Ushers (Team #6)** Chanda Essink, Lynne Friedewald, Chuck Shoemaker

February Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
2	Julie Thomsen	Melissa Davis
9	Dan Deffenbaugh	Jean Barber
16	Kim Creech	Mary Kay LaMaster
23	Bonnie & Kenton Grams	Mary Fisk

## Please pray for

Elaine Schumacher	Carl Utley	Jim Boeve
Carter Johnson	Barry Thomson	Candice Unger
Tarah Davis & family	Greg Howard	Nytha & Dave Glass
Matt Campbell	Pam Canady	Lexi Longshore
Janey Nottage-Tacey	Kathy (Adams) Carrier	Ashley Ibach
Bob Wolf	family of Eleanor Jorgenson	family of Ken Stein
KyMani Riek	Darcie (McDonald) Brink	John Pershing
Ken Fisk	David Hauch	family of Pat Kleiber
Howard Mathews	Monte Malouf	Judd Carrier
Vicki (Fisk) Nieves	Eli Struss	Jane Tushaus
Janelle Baideme	Louie Eckhardt and family	Linda Carllson and family
Bill Anderson	family of Wayne Ganow	Bev Stein

## In memory of

Pat Kleiber, who passed away on 12/27/24  
Wayne Ganow, who passed away on 1/17/25

<b>Tuesday 1/28</b>	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity Board	PEACE NW Classroom
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	7-8pm	CCC Dog Obedience	PEACE NE Classroom
<b>Wednesday 1/29</b>	12pm	Noonday Book Club	<a href="mailto:Sbbrooks52@gmail.com">Sbbrooks52@gmail.com</a> for link
	1-3pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	5pm	PreK-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade WNL	Various
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers Meet	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
<b>Thursday 1/30</b>	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
<b>Friday 1/31</b>	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
	9am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
<b>Saturday 2/1</b>	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
	11am	Melissa Eckhardt funeral	Sanctuary



## Winter Sermon Series: Jesus is making waves!

- *January 5:* Luke 2  
Boy in the temple
- *January 12:*  
Matthew 2 & Luke 3  
The Magi and Baptism
- *January 19:* Luke 4  
Prophecy of Isaiah
- *January 26:* Luke 5  
A great catch & fishing for people
- *February 2:* Luke 6  
Sabbath healing & preaching
- *February 9:* Luke 7:1-17  
Healing & raising from the dead
- *February 16:* Luke 7:18-35  
Jesus affirms John the baptizer
- *February 23:* Luke 7:36-50  
Forgiven at Jesus' feet

## Jesus is making waves!

A sermon series on the gospel of Luke

Join us this winter for a sermon series on the gospel of Luke that shows how Jesus was shaking things up. He makes waves with the visit of the Wise Men, his baptism, preaching and teaching, performing miracles, working on the sabbath, healing and raising people from the dead, quoting prophecies, affirming John the Baptist, offering forgiveness to sinners and inviting others to join him.

**What can we learn from his example?**

<b>Sunday 2/2</b>	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Chapel
	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages	various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, Facebook, Radio
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library
	3pm	Gregory Peterson & John Stender Organ Concert	Sanctuary
<b>Monday 2/3</b>	9am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	1-3pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Pres Pickleball	PEACE Gym
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE Quilting Room
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains Rehearsal	Choir Room
<b>Tuesday 2/4</b>	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	6-7:30pm	WAM Meeting	Anderson Room
	7-8pm	CCC Dog Obedience	PEACE NE Classroom
<b>Wednesday 2/5</b>	11am	PW Coord. Team	
	11:45am	PW Program & Luncheon	Fellowship Hall
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	<a href="mailto:Sbbrooks52@gmail.com">Sbbrooks52@gmail.com</a> for link
	1pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	5pm	PreK-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade WNL	Various
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers Meet	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
<b>Thursday 2/6</b>	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Mission Committee Meeting	PEACE NW Classroom
	6pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
<b>Friday 2/7</b>	10am	Mahjong	Basement Youth Room
<b>Saturday 2/8</b>	1-3pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
<b>Sunday 2/9</b>	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Chapel
	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages	Various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, Facebook, Radio
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library

**LANGENBERG LESSON SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** was established to encourage the youth of our church in their musical pursuits through the generosity of the late Luella Langenberg.

- Parents of students in grades 1-12 may apply for up to \$250 per semester to offset the cost of private music instruction. Grants are limited to one per child.
  - Areas of study include piano, voice, guitar, or any band/orchestral instrument.
  - Parents must be members of First Presbyterian Church, and students must be active participants in the church choir/music program.
- Application forms are available in the church office and on the church website.

• *DEADLINE FOR THE Spring 2025 GRANT PROGRAM IS April 1, 2025.*

• **GRANTS ARE RENEWABLE; PARENTS MUST RE-APPLY EACH SEMESTER.**

Applications are available on the shelf outside the Church Offices or on the Church website at:

<https://fpchastings.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Langenberg-form-Spring-2025.pdf>

## **UPCOMING FORUMS**

**9:15 a.m.**

**Lydia Room**

**FEB 2 - A CONVERSATION WITH OUR GUEST ORGANISTS**

**FEB 9 - BREAD OF LIFE: HOW OUR COMMUNION BREAD IS MADE**

**FEB 16 - MARCH 2 - ADVENT IMPACT: HOW WHAT WE COLLECTED MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

# First Presbyterian Church of Hastings



Gregory Peterson

Dr. Gregory Peterson is Professor of Music and College Organist Emeritus, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, where he taught from 2005 to 2022. In recognition of his distinguished teaching career that also included faculty appointments at Gustavus Adolphus College and Pacific Lutheran University, former students, colleagues, and friends commissioned a new concert work from American composer Libby Larsen in his honor. Dr. Peterson premiered "Tapestry of Fire" on October 13, 2023, at Normandale Lutheran Church, Edina, Minnesota, where he currently serves as Director of Worship and Music. The performance was featured in a national broadcast of Pipe Dreams from American Public Media on May 13, 2024, [www.pipedreams.org](http://www.pipedreams.org), The Spirit Guides #2420.

Prior to his appointment at Luther College, Dr. Peterson served the historic Old South Church, Boston, Massachusetts, as Minister of Music and Organist, where he directed the Old South Choir, Old South Ringers, and performed regularly with the Old South Brass and Timpani Ensemble, and in solo performances on the church's 1921 E.M. Skinner organ, relocated from the St. Paul, Minnesota Auditorium in 1990. He serves several roles in the American Guild of Organists Twin Cities Chapter, and served two terms as President of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians.

Gregory Peterson maintains an active performance schedule that takes him to important venues throughout the country and in Europe. He is featured on the critically acclaimed compact discs Heroic Sounds (Denouement Records), Dieterich Buxtehude: A 300th Anniversary Celebration, Songs of Petition, Peace, and Proclamation, and Air with Joy is Ringing (all released by Luther College).

A graduate of Luther College, he holds advanced degrees from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music and the University of Iowa.

presents

Gregory  
Peterson

and  
Jon

Stender

Sunday,

February 2, 2025

3 p.m.

First Presbyterian  
Church

621 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Hastings, NE

The organ concert is free  
and open to the public.  
All are welcome!



Jon Stender

John Stender has served as the Director of Music and Organist at First Presbyterian Church, Rochester, MN. FPC supports a multi-faceted sacred music ministry, a 4th-12th grade band program, and its thriving A Festival of Music concert series. John earned the master's degree in organ and sacred music at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in 2015, studying organ with Bruce Neswick harpsichord with Elisabeth Wright. He is a 2012 graduate of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa with majors in organ, church music, and religion, where he studied with Gregory Peterson. John has written, arranged, and orchestrated numerous compositions for practical use in music programs where he has served, and has been invited to conduct, lead choral workshops, and perform at the keyboard by colleagues. He resides in Kasson, Minnesota with his wife, Sarah, keyboardist, teacher, and church musician. Together they raise two sons (Daniel & Benjamin), a daughter (Margot), and Dolly Parton (their rescued little white dog).



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873



LANGENBERG  
CONCERT SERIES

First Presbyterian Church

621 N. Lincoln Ave.

Hastings, NE 68901

402-462-5147

fpc@fpchastings.org

Return Service Requested

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

**Head of Church:** Jesus Christ

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett

**Organist and Music Director:** Linda Vollweiler

**Chancel Choir Director:** Dr. Brett Epperson

**Chancel Bells & Calvin/Westminster**

**Bells Director:** Dr. Byron Jensen

**Calvin/Westminster Choir Director:** Linda Johnson

**Praise/Alleluia Choir Directors:** Tim and Teresa Canady

**Praise/Alleluia Bells Choir Director:** Dr. Susan Oliver

**Accompanist and Music Coordinator:** Mary Plock

**Ministers:** Members of the Church

**Associate Pastor:** Rev. Damen Jensen-Heitmann

**Director of Children & Family**

**Ministries:** Rose Koepp

**Church Office Administrator:** Melissa Davis

**Facilities Manager:** Tony Calhoun

**Bookkeeper:** Deb Hamburger

**Scholar in Residence:** Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh

**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Dr. Bill Nottage-Tacey