



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

Home Page Newsletter

A Season Full of Light, Life, and Love

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

Advent is a season of holy anticipation, a time when we lean toward the light, when we prepare our hearts not only to remember Christ's birth long ago but to welcome Christ's presence among us here and now. This year, as I have watched our church come alive with activity, hospitality, music, mission, and community partnerships, I have felt that Advent light shining brightly in our beautifully decked halls.

Just consider what took place in the span of four remarkable days.

On Thursday, December 4, our buildings were bursting with life. The Hastings Community Music Academy filled our Fellowship Hall with a fundraiser dinner and our Sanctuary with a Christmas concert, offering beauty and joy to our community. At the same time, the Hastings Literacy Program held ESL classes in our Christian Education wing, helping neighbors find their voice and confidence. And in the PEACE Center, the Raíces de Mi Pueblo Mexican folkloric dance troupe rehearsed, filling that space with rhythm, culture, and the joy of movement. One church, three ministries, all woven together on our beautiful church campus.

On Saturday, December 6, we again saw how our facilities can serve God's people. The Nebraska Commission on Latinos, appointed by the governor to advocate for Hispanic and Latino communities, met in the newly renovated classroom space in the PEACE Center. Meanwhile, our sanctuary rang with the brilliance of the River City Ringers, a professional handbell ensemble from Omaha whose concert lifted hearts and spirits in this Advent season.

On Sunday, December 7, we experienced one of the most joyful intergenerational worship services in recent memory. Our "Church Mice" senior adult walkers group lit the Advent candle, reminding us of the generations who have nurtured faith in this place. Our children's choir and handbell choirs led us in music that brought smiles to every face and invited us to gather around the communion table. The sanctuary was so full we nearly ran out of communion elements, a good problem for any church to have! After worship, Fellowship Hall became a gallery of nativity scenes, each one shared by a church family and telling the story of God-with-us in a different way. And then, in the afternoon, we welcomed the Hastings College Music Department for their Christmas concert, with both choir and band sharing music that stirred our souls.

This is who we are, and this is what Advent looks like, a church alive with hope, peace, joy, and love. And the season keeps going!

On Saturday, December 13, our church once again opened its doors wide for a community-wide Christmas Craft Make-and-Take event for elementary-aged children and their families. More than 100 participants, church members and neighbors alike, filled our spaces with creativity, laughter, glitter, and glue. It was a joyful reminder that Advent is not only heard in

Continued

scripture and song, but also seen in the bright eyes of children discovering beauty, imagination, and the simple delight of creating something together. In that joyful bustle, we witnessed yet another expression of the hope, peace, joy, and love that define this season.

On Sunday, December 14, our combined Chancel Choir and Youth Choir, joined by a 12-piece chamber orchestra, offered the cantata “The Christmas Light,” complete with a dramatic tableau of the manger. Once again, worship became an embodiment of the story we proclaim. On Sunday afternoon, the South-Central Nebraska Children’s Chorale held their Christmas Concert in our sanctuary, making a joyful noise!

And still, Advent invites us forward.

On Sunday, December 21, our Chancel Handbell Choir will lead much of the worship music, and we will celebrate two baptisms! This is a perfect way to celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent with moving music and signs of new life, new hope, and God’s promises made fresh again. That evening at 7 p.m., we will hold our Blue Christmas service, a gentle and prayerful space for those carrying grief or hardship during the holidays.

On Wednesday, December 24, comes Christmas Eve, when we gather in four unique services to welcome Christ’s birth with candles, carols, and wonder:

- 2:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve worship at College View
- 5:30 p.m. – Family Service in the Sanctuary
- 7:30 p.m. – Traditional Christmas Eve Service
- 11:00 p.m. – Contemplative Candlelight Service

Friends, what an extraordinary season this is. What a gift to witness a church so full of people, full of music, full of mission, full of community partnerships, and full of Advent hope! In all of this activity, in all of this welcome, in all of this joyful noise, I see signs of Christ’s light breaking into the world yet again.

Thank you for being a congregation that embodies that light. May this Advent continue to shape us, renew us, and prepare us for the miracle of Christmas: the birth of the Christ child, love made flesh for us all.

With gratitude and joy,

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

Pastor Greg

December Ushers & Greeters

December Ushers (Team #4) Captain – George Howard, Susie Graham, Dixie & Gale McDonald, Lori & Ted Schroeder

Christmas Eve Ushers (5:30 p.m.) Andrew Barrows, Jessica Meeske, Todd Pankratz, Chuck Hastings (7:30 p.m.) Andrew Barrows, Dixie & Gale McDonald, Lori & Ted Schroeder

December 2025 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
21	Paul & Lynette Krieger	Jenna Jorgensen
Christmas Eve 5:30 p.m. 24	Welsch family	Daveta & Richard Brader
Christmas Eve 7:30 p.m. 24	Mary Kay LaMaster	Volunteers Needed
28	Milrae & Harold Korb	Volunteers Needed

January Ushers & Greeters

January Ushers (Team #5) Captain – Melissa Davis, Matt Fong, Julie Thomsen, Justin Brader

January 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
4	Connie & Richard McClenahan	Jean Stinnette
11	Erica & Brent Brooks	Jan Bolliger
18	Cheryl & Ed Lockwood	Susan Cole
25	Karen Doerr	Mary Kay LaMaster

Ushers and Greeters Needed for Christmas Eve

We are in need of Ushers for the 5:30 p.m. service on
Christmas Eve.

We are also in need of Greeters for the
7:30 p.m. service on
Christmas Eve.

Please let Melissa know if you are able to help out.
(melissa@fpchastings.org or 402-462-5147)

Thank you!

GO & SERVE SOUP LUNCHEON

Sunday, January 11, 2026
Following the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service
in Fellowship Hall

Free Will Donation

*Removal of
the Greens*

Sunday, January 4
following the
10:30 a.m. Worship
Service

The joy of Christmas continues on
Sunday, January 4, following the 10:30 a.m.
Worship Service with removal of the
greens. Please join in the fellowship
and important time and effort with your
church family.





Church Office Hours
for
December 25, 2025-January 1, 2026

December 25-26: Closed
December 29-30: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
December 31: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
January 1: Closed
(Normal hours will resume January 2.)



Upcoming Forum
“Awaited Messiah”

is a Forum series that will be led by our Scholar in Residence, Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh. Dan will examine how prophecy connects to Jesus. Classes will be at 9:15 a.m. on Dec. 7th, and 21st.



WORSHIP & BRUNCH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28
10:30 A.M.



FELLOWSHIP HALL



JOIN US AS WE CONTINUE THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH A WORSHIP SERVICE WITH BRUNCH BEING SERVED. ALL ARE WELCOME!



Christmas Hymn Sing

Wednesday, December 17
7 p.m., in the Sanctuary

Join us for an evening of singing your favorite Christmas Hymns.

All are welcome!

Tuesday 12/16	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School & Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
Wednesday 12/17	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	9:30am	PW Circles 1 & 2	College View
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	1:15pm	PW Circle 3	Fellowship Hall
	5-7pm	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6pm	Chancel Bell Rehearsal	Bell Room
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
Thursday 12/18	7pm	Christmas Hymn Sing	Sanctuary
	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School & Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 12/19	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10am-12pm	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Saturday 12/20		United Harvest	



9:45am-11:30am
Third Saturday of each month
at the PEACE Center

United Harvest Mobile Food Pantry is a joint ministry with First Presbyterian Church & First United Methodist Church. We provide a food distribution to 400+ families.

- If you need food, please feel free to come. The distribution is on a first-come, first-serve basis effective with the September 2025 distribution.
- If you would like to volunteer for this distribution, please come to the church at 9:30am to help us with the distribution.

Sunday 12/21	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, Radio, YouTube
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library
	7pm	Blue Christmas Service	Sanctuary
Monday 12/22	9am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	1-3pm	1 st 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	Choir Room
Tuesday 12/23	9am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
Wednesday 12/24	9am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	2pm	Christmas Eve Service	College View
	5:30pm	Christmas Eve Service (Family)	Sanctuary
	7:30pm	Christmas Eve Service (Traditional)	Sanctuary
	11pm	Christmas Eve Service (Contemplative)	Sanctuary
Thursday 12/25		Church Offices Closed Merry Christmas!	
Friday 12/26		Church Offices Closed	
Sunday 12/28		NO Contemplative Worship Service	
		NO Sunday School	
	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Worship and Brunch	Fellowship Hall
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library

First Presbyterian Church of Hastings THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT ADVENT SERIES



HOPE

IN THE
FIERY
FURNACE
Daniel 3
11/30/25



PEACE

IN THE
VALLEY OF
DRY BONES
Ezekiel 37
12/7/25
Children's Choir
& Bells



JOY

IN
SEEKING
THE LORD
Isaiah 55
12/14/25
Choral Cantata



LOVE

IN THE WORD
BECOMING
FLESH
John 1
12/21/25
Chancel Bells



**Blue
Christmas**

Worship that Honors Grief & Loss
An Ecumenical Service

December 21, 2025 at 7 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
Hastings, NE

FOR LOVE REFUSES TO BE EXTINGUISHED BY DESPAIR

Please pray for

Elaine Schumacher	Carl Utley	Carter Johnson
Tarah Davis & family	Barry Thomson	Sharon Brooks
Matt Campbell	Greg Howard	Alyssa Donley
Janey Nottage-Tacey	Lexi Longshore	Ken Fisk
Bob Wolf	family of Dave Henderson	Jean Stinnette
KyMani Riek	Zsuzsanna Fazakas	Gary & Connie Whitcomb
Janelle Baideme	The Unger family	Sammy Nahorny
family of Jim Harrenstein	Judd Carrier	Mary Lewis
family of Gayle Struss	Nytha & Dave Glass	Bruce Batterson
Carole Pedersen	Cynthia Sheppard Jordan	Willis Horton
Charles Hermes	Elladee Ronhovde	family of Yvonne Ziemba
Tony Glenn	Carol Harrenstein	
Molly Kammerer and family	Pam Canady	
Martha Huffman (Nancy Grams' sister)	Francisco Diaz (Beto)	

In memory of

Dave Henderson, who passed away on November 2, 2025
 Gayle Struss, who passed away on November 7, 2025
 Yvonne Ziemba, who passed away on November 13, 2025

Dear Members and Friends of FPC,

Thank you for your generous contributions. Many of you use investments for the benefit of the church. Sometimes these checks come to the church without the contributor's name. Getting these checks credited to the appropriate contributor is very important but without a name, it is impossible. When you request your gift be sent to the church, please Melissa or myself know that it is on its way.

Thank you,
Deb Hamburger
Finance Administrator

Christmas Eve With First Presbyterian

Cozy Christmas
2:00PM

A service of caroling and rejoicing is held at College View. Chancel Choir and Pastors hold a service for residents and their family members.

A Family Christmas
5:30PM

A lively service held in the sanctuary features traditional hymns, organ, a child-friendly message, and singing by candlelight.

Traditional Service
7:30PM

Held in the sanctuary, this service contains traditional hymns, music by the choir, and singing by candle light.

Holy Night
11:00PM

A contemplative service is held in the sanctuary to greet the newborn child with simple music and prayer.

Jens Korndörfer, Organ
Concert: Saturday, January 24 @ 3:00 pm
Worship: Sunday, January 25 @ 10:30 am



Dr. Jens Korndörfer is the Bowden Professor of Music and Associate Professor of Organ at [Baylor University](#) in El Paso, Texas and is regularly invited to perform and teach at prestigious venues and festivals around the world. Praised as “a virtuoso in the grand Romantic tradition” who creates “performances that are deeply musically satisfying as well as exciting” (The American Organist).

Korndörfer's performances include Davies Symphony Hall, the Cadet Chapel in West Point, Duke University Chapel, Cathedral-Basilica, Montreal Bach Festival, Cathedrals in Washington, Berlin, Bremen, Paris, Salzburg, Oslo, and Moscow, Westminster, the Royal Chapel in Versailles, the Frauenkirche in Dresden.

POINSETTIAS



Poinsettias may be purchased in honor of or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$15 each. Money raised over the cost will be donated to United Harvest.

Your donation makes a difference. *Please return your order form to the church office as soon as possible.*

Poinsettia in memory of _____

Poinsettia in honor of _____

Given by _____

I will take my poinsettia home after the Christmas Eve services Yes No

I will leave my poinsettia at the church: Yes No

A Free Tax Preparation Clinic will be taking place in Hastings for several days in February and March to help families complete their taxes and **we need volunteer Tax Preparers!** No experience is needed and you will receive training to help people complete simple returns. This is a rewarding opportunity to volunteer for over one or several days to help families receive Tax Credits they are eligible for. We are looking for Volunteers to be Greeters as well! Go to <https://tcan.unl.edu/> to learn more and to sign up.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25 AT 11:30AM, FPC SANCTUARY

Annual Congregational Meeting

ANYONE CAN ATTEND, ALL MEMBERS CAN VOTE





Due to the Holiday Schedule,
the next Home Page Newsletter
will be sent out on 1/6/2026.

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
Interim Chancel Choir Director: Dr. Robin Koozer
Chancel Bells & Youth Bells
Director: Dr. Byron Jensen
Youth Choir Director: Linda Johnson
Children Choir Director: Teresa Canady
Children 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