



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

Home Page Newsletter

This is *our* church: Presbyterian Polity and the Annual Congregational Meeting

One of the gifts of being Presbyterian is that we believe deeply—*both theologically and practically*—that the church belongs to the people of God. Not to a pastor. Not to a small group behind the scenes. Not to a denomination far away. **This is your church.**

That conviction is rooted in one of the core ideas of the Reformed tradition: **the priesthood of all believers**. Drawing on passages like 1 Peter 2:9: “*You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people,*” Presbyterians affirm that every baptized member is called to participate in Christ’s ministry and in the life and governance of the church. Each of us is gifted by the Holy Spirit, each of us is entrusted with responsibility, and each of us has a voice in the life of the church.

How Presbyterians are led

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not governed by bishops, or by congregational vote alone. Presbyterian governance, what we call *polity*, is built on shared leadership and communal discernment.

At First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, the spiritual and practical leadership of the congregation is entrusted to the **Session**, which is made up of **13 ruling elders**. Ruling elders are elected from the congregation and ordained to serve as spiritual leaders: listening for God’s guidance, caring for the life of the church, and helping the congregation live faithfully into its calling. The term “ruling elder” is not about “ruling” over the church, but rather think of a ruler used to measure things. Our ruling elders are measuring, encouraging, and leading our church together.

As your pastor, I serve as the **teaching elder** on Session. While pastors have a particular role that includes preaching, teaching, administering the sacraments, and offering pastoral leadership, we are clear in our polity that **all elders share equal responsibility and authority in governing the church**. No one elder speaks alone; we discern and lead together. The Book of Order puts it this way: “**Ruling elders and teaching elders are called to serve together in councils of the church**” (F-3.02).

Discerning the Holy Spirit together

At every level of the church, our calling is not simply to make decisions efficiently, but to **discern the will of the Holy Spirit**. Scripture reminds us that “*There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit... To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good*” (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7).

Continued

That belief is why Presbyterians pray before meetings, listen carefully to one another, and value participation. Discernment is rarely quick or easy, but we trust that God speaks through the gathered community.

Why the Annual Congregational Meeting Matters

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** is one of the most visible and important expressions of this shared leadership. At this meeting, the congregation:

- **Receives the annual budget**, a practical and theological document that reflects our shared priorities and mission
- **Votes on the terms of call for the pastors**, affirming the covenant between pastors and congregation
- **Elects officers**, elders, deacons, and trustees, entrusting fellow members with leadership in the coming years
- **Reflects on the annual report**, to think about how we have “been the church” over the last year and how we plan to “be the church” in the year to come.

These actions are not mere formalities. They are acts of faith and trust, moments when the congregation claims its responsibility for the present and future of the church. As the Book of Order reminds us, “**The people of God are called to participate in God’s mission in the world**” (F-1.01), and that participation includes prayerful decision-making about leadership and resources.

A shared calling

Presbyterian polity assumes something hopeful and demanding: that God’s Spirit is at work not just in individuals, but in the whole body. When we gather for a congregational meeting, we do so not as consumers or spectators, but as members of Christ’s body, seeking together to be faithful stewards of the church we love.

So when you attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 25 at 10:30am, remember:

This is *your* church.

Your voice matters.

Your presence matters.

And together, with humility, prayer, and hope, we trust that God will continue to guide us into the future God is preparing.

Your servant in Christ,

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

Teaching Elder (Pastor) Greg

January & February Ushers & Greeters

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

January 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
25	Karen Doerr	Jan Bolliger

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

February 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
1	Ann & Robin Koozer	Melissa Davis
8	Jeni & George Howard	Julie Thomsen
15	Mary Fisk	Kim Creech
22	Bonnie & Kenton Grams	Carol Harrenstein

Please pray for

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

In memory of

Elmer Heeren, who passed away on 1/17/26



Karla & Monte Malouf 2/4/1977

Lesla & Steve Cropley 2/10/1979

Uschi & Larry Butler 2/18/1967

Jessica & Greg Allen-Pickett 2/24/2001

Irina Belikova-Erickson & Brett Erickson 2/27/1998

Nytha Glass-1
Carole Storer-1
LaRaesha Kugel-1
Ivy Cooper-1
Chanda Essink-2
George Adam-2
Katie Kingsley-3
Nina Meyer-4
Dawson Kugel-5
Michelle Musgrave-5
George Howard-6
Pam Canady-6
C.L. Wimer-6
Riley Mullen-6
Justin Brader-7
JoAnn Williams-8
Ben Welsch-9
Meredith Oliver-9



Doug Phelps-10
Dick McClenahan-11
Jon Propp-12
Becky Meyer-12
Bliss Overmiller-12
Hannah Hafer-13
Gayle Fandry-13
David Jensen-Heitmann-13
Kathy Amyot-14

Rachel Guiai-14
Mary Plock-14
Mike Kleppinger-15
Larry Stromer-16
Lainey Hermann-16
BJ Pumroy-17
Keaton Redline-17
Luca Hultman-18
Dacia Hultman-21
Thomas Moore-22
Ramona Shetler-22
Tyler Koepp-23
Tom Kubicka-23
Harvey Freetly-24
Sharon Steenbarger-24
Dana Odom-25
Patti Deveny-26
Brent Brooks-26

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

Annual Congregational Meeting

ANYONE CAN ATTEND, ALL MEMBERS CAN VOTE



Tuesday 1/20	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 Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
Wednesday 1/21	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	9:30am	PW Circles 1 & 2	Fellowship Hall
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	1:15pm	PW Circle 3	Fellowship Hall
	5pm-7:15pm	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult game night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers Meet	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
Thursday 1/22	7:30pm	Chancel Bells Practice	Bell Room
	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 1/23	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Saturday 1/24	3pm	Jens Korndörfer Organ Recital	Sanctuary

Sunday 1/25	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages	Various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, You Tube, Radio
	11:30am	Annual Congregational Meeting	Sanctuary
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library
Monday 1/26	9am-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	1-3pm	1 st Pres Pickleball	PEACE Gym
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE Quilting Room
	5:30pm	Foundation Board Meeting	Anderson Room
	6-10pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains Rehearsal	Choir Room
Tuesday 1/27	9am-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity Board Meeting	Middle School Youth Room
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
Wednesday 1/28	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	5-7:15pm	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers Meet	basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells Practice	Bell Room
Thursday 1/29	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 1/30	10am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10am	Mahjong	Basement Youth Room
Sunday 2/1	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, You Tube
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE



2/18/26

7:15 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SANCTUARY



Between the Testaments

led by Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh

January 25

9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Lydia Room

How did we get from the Old Testament to the New Testament? Scholar-in-Residence, Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh, will explore the time period and theological developments that took place in ancient Israel between the compilation of the Older Testament and the New Testament. In what is sure to be a very interesting series, Dan will trace how we get from the writings of the Old to the New.

*The Langenberg Concert Series of
First Presbyterian Church of Hastings presents*

Jens Korndörfer

Organ



German American organist Dr. Jens Korndörfer is the Joyce O. Bowden Professor of Music and Associate Professor of Organ at Baylor University in 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), highlights of Korndörfer’s performance career include Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, the Cadet Chapel in West Point, Duke University Chapel, the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Louis, the Montreal Bach Festival, the Cathedrals in Washington, Berlin, Bremen, Paris, Salzburg, Oslo, and Moscow, Westminster Abbey in London, the Royal Chapel in Versailles, the Frauenkirche in Dresden, Suntory Hall and Metropolitan Art Space in Tokyo, Kyoto Concert Hall, and the Cultural Centre in Hong Kong.

Concert: January 24, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

Free admission • Reception to follow

Worship: January 25, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

Both events at First Presbyterian Church of Hastings • 621 N. Lincoln Avenue

January 2026 Communion Offering

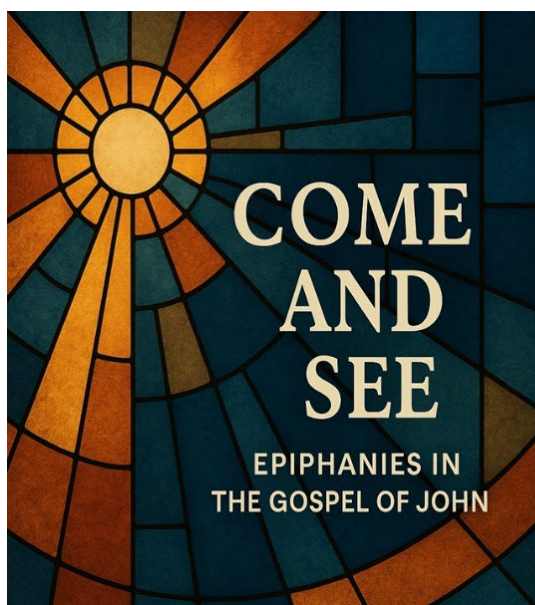


The primary purpose of Royal Family KIDS Camp is to give foster children ages 7–11 a week of positive memories and royal treatment in a Christian camp environment. Adult Camp Counselors give attention and encouragement to his/her “Big Camper” during their time at camp. In addition, each Camper is exposed to a variety of fun activities, designed for their success and to build self-esteem. For most of these children, it’s the best week of the year—a special time when they can focus on having fun and enjoy being a kid.

Camp Directors, Staff and Counselors go through intensive training. This includes a study of the dynamics of child abuse and neglect, facilitated by recognized professionals in these fields. There is also an intensive screening process for Counselors and Staff. Two Children—and only two—are assigned to each Camp Counselor. In addition, there is generally a “back-up” Staff person for each Counselor, so the actual Staff-to-Camper ratio is often one to one.

February 2026 Communion Offering

Catholic Social Services for help with utilities



Six-week Epiphany series that traces a journey of awakening, revelation, and transformation through key stories in the Gospel of John.

- January 11: John 2 – Grace poured out
- January 18: John 2 – A Zeal for Justice
- January 25: John 3 – The Spirit Enters
- February 1 – John 4 – Seen and Known
- February 8 – John 4-5 – Rise and Walk
- February 15 – John 9 – Open eyes & Hearts

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's Choir Director: Teresa Canady
Children's Bells 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