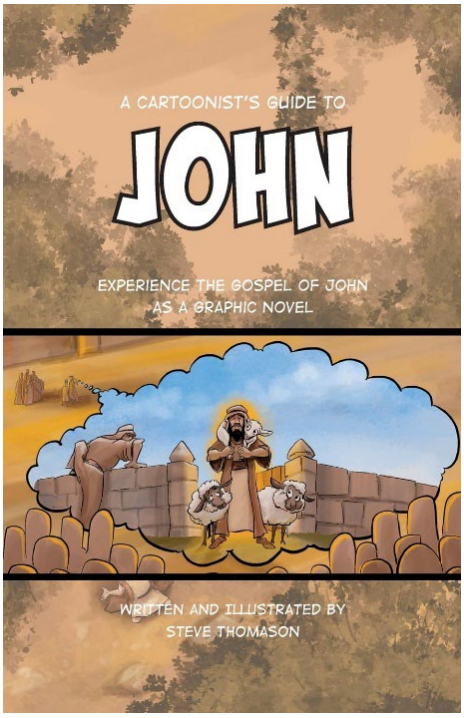
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS
SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

Home Page Newsletter

Seeing the Gospel: Welcoming "The Art Pastor," Dr. Steve Thomason

Sometimes the best way to *hear* the Gospel is to *see* it.



This weekend we have a special guest joining us at First Presbyterian Church of Hastings who helps people do exactly that. Dr. Steve Thomason, known as "The Art Pastor," will be with us for a full weekend of learning, creativity, and worship.

Dr. Thomason is an associate professor of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship at Luther Seminary. He describes himself as a post-Evangelical, missional, neo-Lutheran theologian, rostered in the ELCA, and an artist. More simply put, he is someone who loves God deeply and has dedicated his life to helping others grow in faith through both words *and* images. He has created graphic-novel style renderings of numerous books of the Bible and regularly develops visual, innovative, and educational resources for the church. His work explores spiritual formation, biblical studies, theology, and art in ways that are accessible, thoughtful, and often surprisingly moving.

We are excited that his time with us will span several settings in our community:

- **Friday:** Dr. Thomason will present to two Hastings College art classes, engaging students in conversation about creativity and visual storytelling.
- **Saturday:** He will record a podcast conversation with Pastor Damen about art, theology, and the life of the church.
- **Sunday Morning Adult Education Forum:** Dr. Thomason will offer an *Introduction to the Gospel of John*, using both teaching and visual art to illuminate the themes of light, revelation, and transformation that run throughout John's Gospel.
- **Sunday Worship:** Dr. Thomason will preach and share his artwork, focusing on *John 4:46 – 5:18,* inviting us to encounter Scripture not only through hearing but also through seeing.

Continued

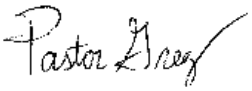
For many of us, faith has long been shaped by sermons, hymns, and study. Dr. Thomason reminds us that images can also be a doorway into deeper understanding. His art does not replace Scripture; rather, it opens fresh angles of reflection, helping us notice details, emotions, and connections we might otherwise miss. In a season when we are walking through the Gospel of John together, his presence feels especially timely.

Whether you are an artist, a lifelong Bible student, or simply someone curious about new ways of engaging faith, this weekend offers a unique opportunity. Come to the adult education forum to explore the big picture of John's Gospel, and then join us in worship as we experience Scripture proclaimed through both word and image.

If you'd like to preview some of Dr. Thomason's work or learn more about his story and approach, you can visit his website at **www.stevethomason.net**

We often say that God meets us in many ways: through music, through community, through service, and through silence. This weekend, we will also be reminded that God can meet us through art. I hope you will join us as we welcome Dr. Steve Thomason and open ourselves to seeing the Gospel with fresh eyes.

Your Servant in Christ,



Pastor Greg

February Ushers & Greeters

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

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

February 2026 Communion Offering

Catholic Social Services for help with utilities

Communion Offering Updates

The Christmas Joy offering raised a total of $3,127.20

The January communion offering raised a total of $608.00

Thank you for your generous support!

Come help us celebrate! 100th Birthday!
Evelyn Rose Dolezal Viglicky
will be celebrating her 100th Birthday on March 9th, 2026.
Her Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren are honoring her with an Open House on
Saturday, March 7th, 2 - 4 p.m.
Adams County Fairgrounds, Hastings, NE
Please, No Gifts!

We are in need of volunteers who would like to serve as additional Ushers for 2026.

Team 1 (March & September)
Team 3 (May & November)
Team 5 (January & July)
Team 6 (February & August)

Please let the Church Office know if you are able to help out.
We appreciate any help we can receive.

Tuesday 2/3	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:15pm	EnCourage Program	PEACE Center
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School & Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6pm	WAM Meeting	Anderson Room
Wednesday 2/4	8am-4pm	Hastings Middle School	PEACE West Classroom
	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	11am	PW Coord. Team	Parlor
	11:45am	PW Luncheon	Fellowship Hall
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	5pm-7:15pm	PreK-12th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:30pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells Practice	Bell Room
Thursday 2/5	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	5:30pm	Mission Committee Meeting	Anderson Room
	6-10pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	6pm-8:30pm	Cub Scouts Pinewood Derby	Fellowship Hall
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
Friday 2/6	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10am-12pm	Mahjong	Basement Youth Room

HASTINGS COLLEGE

Hastings College Choir Concert

Sunday, February 15
3 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary

The Church Offices will be closed on Monday, February 16 in observance of President's Day.

Sunday 2/8	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
Monday 2/9	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12:30pm-3pm	PEO-GK	Fellowship Hall
	1-3pm	1st 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 2/10	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 & Choir Rooms
	5:30pm	Congregational Life Meeting	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Trustee Meeting	PEACE West Classroom
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	6:45pm	Deacons	Anderson Room
Wednesday 2/11	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	5-7:15pm	PreK-12th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm-7pm	Adult Game Night	Various
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
Thursday 2/12	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	4-6pm	Hastings College Choir Dress Rehearsal	Sanctuary
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Room
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	6-10pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 2/13		Jr. High Retreat	
	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	10am-12pm	Mahjong	Basement Youth Room
Saturday 2/14		Jr. High Retreat	
Sunday 2/15	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
	3pm	HC Choir Concert	Sanctuary

December 1, 2025

Dear Pastor Greg, Session, and Congregation,

As the close of this year draws near, Janey and I have come to the realization that our lives are not likely to include a return to residency in Hastings. Accordingly, Janey has included in this missive, her request for a Letter of Transfer for her membership to go to First Presbyterian Church in Topeka where we both have found a spiritual home where ministries of the gospel and commitments to social justice and peace are very much like those of Hastings First.

Furthermore, I would request of the Session, that my name as Pastor Emeritus be removed from publications and bulletins etc. Knowing with deep gratitude my appreciation for that heartfelt honor. It seems most appropriate during this beautiful season of the year, to take wisdom from Charles Dickens that neither you dear colleague, nor the Session, or the congregation be visited upon by "the ghosts of pastors past" whether at this time of year or any other time of year going forward. ☺ And I say to you, once again, what a joy and blessing it is to have been succeeded by such a man as your good and loving self.

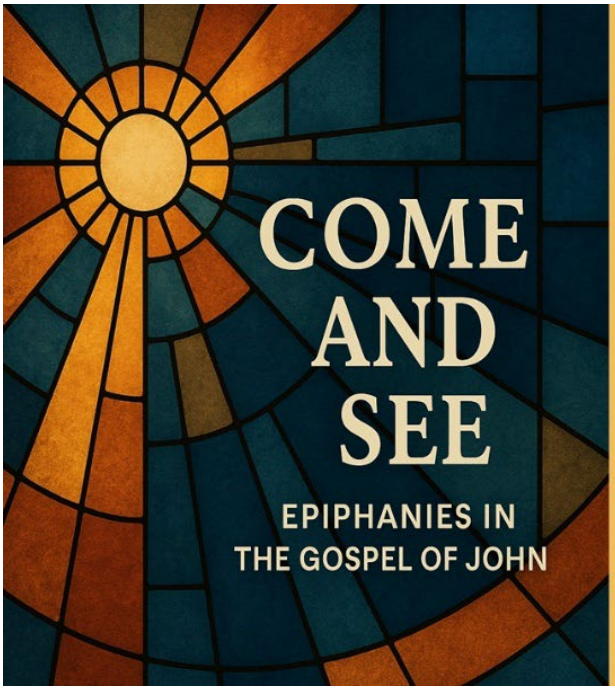
Janey and I will keep you, Doreen, the Session, Deacons staff and congregation in our continual prayers and we will follow with deep interest the progress and prosperity of the gospel ministry casting the light and love of our Lord Jesus Christ into the community of Hastings, the college, our country, and into the darkness of a world in need of His Love and Light.

With Kindest regards
and the peace and love of Christ
We remain with you in heart
Rev Bill and Janey

The Merriest Christmas To All

College Scholarship Applications
are available on
the church website at
https://fpchastings.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/College-Scholarship-2026.pdf
or
in the Church Office

The application and essay are **due March 1, 2026.** Completed applications can be dropped off at the church office or emailed directly to rstruss@hastings.edu.



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

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 2026 GRANT PROGRAM IS April 1, 2026.*
- 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/2026/01/Langenberg-form-Spring-2026.pdf

Please pray for

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

In memory of

Elmer Heeren, who passed away on January 17, 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'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