



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

Home Page Newsletter

Ash Wednesday: Remembering the Dust, Receiving the Grace

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

Each year the season of Lent begins with a simple, quiet, and deeply meaningful service: **Ash Wednesday**. It is not flashy. It is not loud. It is honest. And it is beautiful.

On Ash Wednesday we gather to receive a small cross of ashes on our foreheads and to hear the ancient words: *“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

At first, those words can sound somber. In a world that often encourages us to avoid thinking about limits or endings, **Ash Wednesday invites us into something different**: Not fear, but honesty. Not shame, but humility. Not despair, but hope.

The story of our faith begins with dust. In the book of Genesis, we hear that God formed the first human from the dust of the ground and breathed life into them. **Humanity is dust animated by Spirit, ordinary material shaped by loving hands**. The message is not that we are insignificant, but that we are deeply connected to God’s creation and lovingly held within it.

Later, in the Gospel of John, Chapter 9, Jesus kneels down and uses dust from the ground to make mud that brings healing to a man born blind. Dust becomes a means of restoration and new sight. From the very beginning of scripture to the ministry of Jesus, we see a consistent truth: **God is not afraid of dust. God works with dust. God delights in dust. God loves dust.**

The ashes we use on Ash Wednesday also carry their own story. They are made from the palm branches we waved joyfully on Palm Sunday last year. The same branches that once marked celebration and parade are gathered, dried, and burned to create the ashes placed on our foreheads. The palms of joy become the ashes of reflection. **Our faith holds both celebration and honesty, both triumph and humility**. Ash Wednesday reminds us that life includes both, and God is present in all of it.

Receiving ashes is not about guilt, it is about grounding. It reminds us that we are human. We are finite, imperfect, in need of grace. And it reminds us that we are also deeply loved. **The cross traced in ashes is a symbol not only of mortality, but of mercy**. Even as we remember that we are dust, we are pointed toward the hope of

Continued

resurrection. The cross tells us that God enters fully into our human experience and does not abandon us there.

Ash Wednesday is the doorway into Lent, a season of reflection, renewal, and preparation for Easter. It is an invitation to slow down, to pay attention, and to make space for God’s light in our lives. It is a moment to ask gentle questions about where we need healing, where we seek clarity, and where we long for new life.

We invite you to join us for this meaningful service as we begin the Lenten journey together. **We will gather in the sanctuary on Wednesday, February 18 at 7:15pm for this service.** Come as you are. Come with questions, with hopes, with weariness, or with curiosity. Come to remember that you are dust, and to be reminded that you are loved.

Your Servant in Christ,



Pastor Greg

February & March Ushers & Greeters

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

February 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
22	Bonnie & Kenton Grams	Carol Harrenstein

March Ushers (Team #1) Chuck Hastings, Kim Creech, **Volunteers Needed**

March 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
1	Gifts of Women Sunday	Gifts of Women Sunday
8	Carolyn & Richard McKenzie	Melissa Davis
15	Margaret & Charles Hermes	Sue Medsker
22	Clyde Sachtleben & Carolyn Nowka	Melissa Davis
29	Kay Georgiana	Volunteers Needed



VOLUNTEERS *NEEDED*

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.

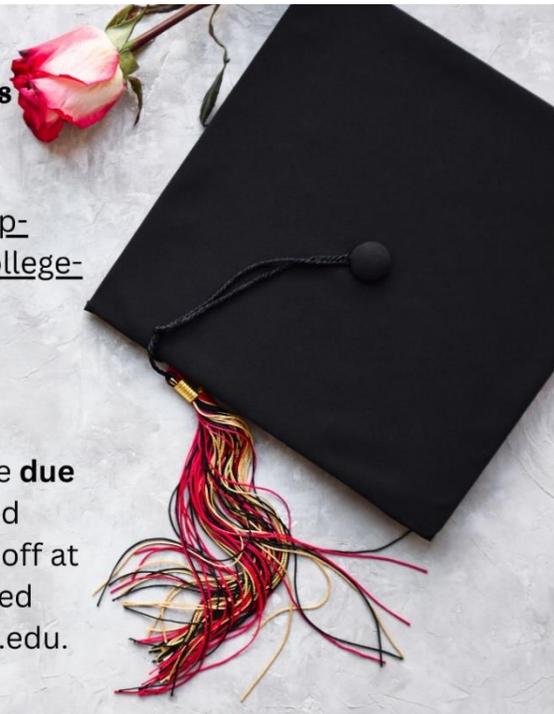
100th Birthday

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!

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.



Upcoming Forum

The Word Becomes Art

February 22, March 1, 8, 22, 29

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

Lydia Room

Instructor: Dan Deffenbaugh

The Gospel of John emphasizes the importance of the incarnation, God made manifest in Christ. This class will look at various ways God's Word can also be known through visual art.

Tuesday 2/17	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
	7pm	Cruise Orientation	Anderson Room
Wednesday 2/18	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	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
7:15pm	Ash Wednesday Service	Fellowship Hall	
Thursday 2/19	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	Session Meets	Anderson Room
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	6-10pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	7pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 2/20	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
	11:45am	PEO-G	PEACE NW Classroom
Saturday 2/21	9:45-11:30am	United Harvest	PEACE Center



Hands Around the World Store
has received new items for
Spring and Easter.

Stop by the store and checkout
our new merchandise!

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ASH
WEDNESDAY
SERVICE

2/18/26
7:15 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SANCTUARY

Sunday 2/22	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
Monday 2/23	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	1-3pm	1 st Pres Pickleball	PEACE gym
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE quilting room
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	6-9pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains	Choir Room
Tuesday 2/24	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity Board	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 2/25	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12pm-1pm	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	Woodcarver's Meet	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
Thursday 2/26	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	6-10pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Friday 2/27	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10am-12pm	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Saturday 2/28	9am-1pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
Sunday 3/1	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Sanctuary
	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

February 2026 Communion Offering

Catholic Social Services for help with utilities



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.



Ashley & Jeff Hermann 3/8/2014
Cathy & Eldon Mitzelfelt 3/13/1971
Janna & Chris Johnson 3/19/1983
Joy & George White 3/19/1972
Laurie & Brian Johnson 3/20/1982
Linda & Terry Hall 3/30/1996

Lois Meeske - 1
Kade Jorgensen - 1
Tony Eddleman - 2
Cheryl Lockwood - 2
Carol Kleppinger - 2
Joan Shaw - 3
Kim Hermann - 4
Peggy Thomson - 5
Audrey Miller - 5
Adam Brooks - 6
Lesa Cropley - 9
Evelyn Viglicky - 9
Beth Funkey - 10
Henry Black - 10
Stan Essink - 10
Les Seiler - 10
Justin Stein - 10



Amy Black - 11
Phyllis O'Dey - 11
Carter Lay - 12
Danny Graves - 12
Maggie Nielsen - 12
Joshua Brooks - 13
Kirk Dielman - 13
Linda Donohue - 15
Jennifer Boeve - 15

Darlene Payne - 15
Kathleen Nelson - 18
Bill Boyd - 19
Kaela Pumroy - 20
Stephanie Adam - 22
Dayna Grimmett - 25
Hank Little - 26
Jenni Welsch - 26
Matthew Klug - 26
Grace Canady - 27
Erik Nielsen - 27
Stacey Eddleman - 28
Allison Kern - 28
Arich Fruehling - 28
Maryann Shorey - 31
Hannah Jensen-Heitmann - 31
Deb Freeburger - 31

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
Carole Pedersen
Charles Hermes
Tony Glenn
Francisco Diaz (Beto)

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

Barry Thomson
Greg Howard
Lexi Longshore
Zsuzsanna Fazakas
The Unger family
Judd Carrier
Nytha & Dave Glass
Elladee Ronhovde
Carol Harrenstein
Pam Canady
Carl Utley

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

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