



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

Home Page Newsletter

Walking with Jesus Through the Questions of Lent

Dear First Presbyterian Church family:

As we continue our journey through the season of Lent, our congregation has been walking step-by-step through the final chapters of the Gospel of John. Lent invites us to slow down and reflect — not only on what happened to Jesus during the final days of his life, but also on what these stories reveal about our own hearts and our own discipleship.

Over the past few weeks, we have encountered three powerful moments in John's Gospel that ask searching questions of anyone who seeks to follow Christ.

On March 8, we read the story of Jesus' arrest and Peter's denial (John 18:12–27). Peter had been one of Jesus' closest followers. He had witnessed miracles, heard Jesus' teaching, and even boldly proclaimed his loyalty. Yet when the pressure mounted and standing with Jesus became risky, Peter denied even knowing him — not once, but three times.

It is easy for us to shake our heads at Peter. Yet if we are honest, perhaps we recognize ourselves in him. How often do we soften or hide our faith when it might make us uncomfortable? How often do we remain silent when the love, justice, and compassion of Christ call us to speak? Peter's story reminds us that discipleship is not only about what we believe when things are easy, but how we live when faith becomes costly.

Then on March 15, we moved to Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate (John 18:28–40). During this encounter, Pilate famously asks Jesus a haunting question: "What is truth?"

It is a question that echoes powerfully in our own time. We live in a world full of competing voices, conflicting narratives, and endless streams of information. Truth can feel slippery, complicated, or even inconvenient. Pilate seems less interested in discovering truth than in avoiding the consequences of it. Standing before him is Jesus — the one who earlier in John's Gospel declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Yet Pilate looks truth in the face and walks away.

Again, we might recognize something of ourselves in that moment. How often do we ask questions about truth without truly wanting the answer? How often do we turn away when the truth challenges our assumptions, our comfort, or our loyalties to worldly powers?

This coming Sunday, March 22, we will continue the story as Jesus is mocked, humiliated, and ultimately condemned to crucifixion (John 19:1-16). In this chilling scene, the religious leaders cry out to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar."

Continued

These are startling words. The very leaders entrusted with guiding Israel in faith declare their allegiance to the power of empire rather than to the reign of God. In their fear, anger, and political calculation, they reject the very authority they are called to proclaim.

And once again, Lent invites us to ask where we see ourselves in the story. Who or what claims our loyalty? What powers, ideologies, or identities compete for the allegiance that belongs to Christ alone? Do we sometimes place our trust in political power, social status, personal security, or cultural identity instead of the transforming reign of God?

These three scenes — Peter’s denial, Pilate’s question, and the chief priests’ declaration — reveal something profound about the human condition. Fear, confusion, and misplaced loyalties surround Jesus on every side as he walks the path toward the cross. Yet the story is not ultimately about human failure. It is about the steadfast love of Christ.

Even as Peter denies him, Jesus continues forward. Even as Pilate questions truth, Jesus embodies it. Even as the crowds reject his kingship, Jesus reveals a kingdom not built on violence or domination, but on sacrificial love.

This is why Lent is such an important season in the life of the church. It is not a time for guilt or shame, but for honest reflection. Lent invites us to look into the mirror of the Gospel and ask difficult but life-giving questions:

Where do we deny Christ?
Where do we avoid the truth?
Where do we give our allegiance to lesser kings?

And in asking these questions, we also hear the good news. The same Jesus who walked through betrayal, injustice, and rejection is the one who meets us with grace. Peter’s denial is not the end of Peter’s story. Failure is never the final word in the kingdom of God.

As we continue our Lenten journey together, may these stories invite us into deeper reflection, deeper repentance, and deeper trust in the One who is truly our King. And may we follow Jesus faithfully — not only when it is easy, but wherever the way of love leads.

Your Servant in Christ,



Pastor Greg

March Ushers and Greeters

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

March 2026 Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
22	Melissa Davis	Volunteers Needed
29	Kay Georgiana	Volunteers Needed

April Ushers and Greeters

April (Team #2) Captain – Duane Huber, Steve Illingworth, Daveta & Dick Brader, Lois Hafer

April Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
Easter 8:30am 5	Volunteers Needed	Melissa Davis
Easter 10:30am 5	Harold & Milrae Korb	Jan Bolliger
12	Damen & LaRaesha Kugal	Melissa Davis
19	Lynne Friedewald & Chuck Shoemaker	Jenna Jorgensen
26	Jane & Chuck Bauer	Susan Cole

Easter Greeters and Ushers Needed We are need of Ushers and Greeters for the 8:30 a.m. service on Easter. Please let the church office know if you are able to help out. Thanks so much!

You're Invited
To a Chili Cook-off!!!
 Hosted by:
 Congregational Life Committee

Sunday March **22** **12** PM Fellowship Hall

Come enjoy chili that has been prepared by our various Church Committees, and vote for your favorites!

THE WAY OF LOVE
 FOLLOWING JESUS THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Six-week Lenten series that invites us to walk The Way of Love: A path marked by compassion, courage, humility, and hope.

- 2/22: John 11 - Love that weeps
- 3/1: John 13 - Love that serves
- 3/8: John 18 - Love in the shadows
- 3/15: John 18 - Love on trial
- 3/22: John 19 - Love that bears
- 3/29: John 12 - Love that enters in

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

- Team 1 (March & September)
- 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.

THE STRING BEANS Free Concert!

Event Concert
 Date Sunday, April 12
 Time 3:00 p.m.
 Location FPC Sanctuary

www.thestringbeans.com

Please pray for

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



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.
- If you would like to volunteer for this distribution, please come to the church at 9:30am to help us with the distribution.

EASTER LILIES 2026

Easter Lilies are \$12 each. Monies raised above the cost will be donated to Heartland Health.



Lily in memory of _____

Lily in honor of _____

Given by _____

I will take my Lily home after the Easter Sunday services: Yes No

I will leave my Lily at the church: Yes No

Holy Week 2026

3/29 Palm Sunday
 Contemplative Service: 8:30 a.m. in Chapel
 Traditional Service: 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary
 with kids and youth choir and bells at 10:30 a.m. service

4/2 Maundy Thursday
 6 p.m. Table Fellowship & Service in Memorial Room

4/3 Good Friday
 7 p.m. Service in Sanctuary

Good Friday - Easter morning
 Easter Prayer Vigil in Chapel

4/5 Easter Sunday
 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Services in Sanctuary
 with Cathedral Brass, Chancel Choir, and Chancel Bells at both services

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>

Tues. 3/17	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
	6-8pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
Wed. 3/18	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	9:30am	PW Circles 1 & 2	PEACE Center NW Classroom
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	12:30pm-7pm	HC Brass Day	TBD
	1:15pm	PW Circle 3	PEACE Center NW Classroom
	5-7:15pm	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	Various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
Thur. 3/19	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE Gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School & Choir Rooms
	6-8pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Fri. 3/20	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Sat. 3/21		United Harvest	PEACE Center

Sun. 3/22	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, YouTube, Radio
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library
	12pm	Chili Cook-off	Fellowship Hall
Mon. 3/23	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	1-3pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE quilting room
	6-8pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains	Choir Room
Tues. 3/24	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity	Middle School Youth Room
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	6pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
Wed. 3/25	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	5pm-7:15pm	PreK-12 th Grade WNL	various
	5:30pm	Adult Game Night	Fellowship Hall
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir Practice	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
Thur. 3/26	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	12:30pm	Dulcimer	HCMA Room 112
	5:30pm	Hastings Literacy Classes	Middle School Youth and Choir Rooms
	5:30pm	Session Meets	Anderson Room
	6pm	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	6pm-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE gym
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Fri. 3/27	9-11am	Hastings Pickleball Club	PEACE gym
	10am-12pm	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Sun. 3/29		Palm Sunday	
	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, YouTube, Radio
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library

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.

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Team 1 (March & September)

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.



Noonday Book Club

The Noonday Book Group will begin a new discussion in the upcoming week. Elaine Pagel's book *The Gnostic Gospels* will be the focus. Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh will lead the weekly conversations online. All are welcome to log in at 11:55 a.m. every Wednesday.

Please contact Sharon Brooks at sbrooks52@gmail.com or Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh at ddeffenbaugh425@gmail.com for more information about connecting online.



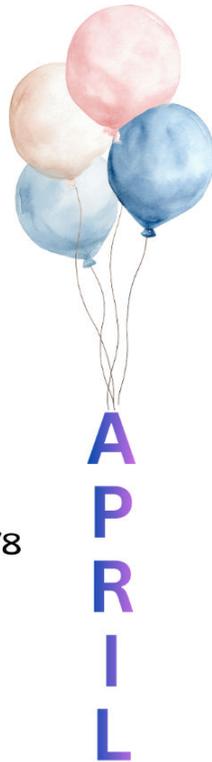
Hands Around the World Store has received new items for Spring and Easter.

Stop by the store and check out our new merchandise!

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Evelyn Bridges 4/1
 Brett Erickson 4/3
 Wendy Propp 4/4
 Kenton Grams 4/6
 Kevin Turner 4/6
 Will Locke 4/6
 Norma Saathoff 4/6
 Ruth Swingle 4/6
 Andrea Franzen 4/6
 Michael Brooks 4/7
 Doug Ourada 4/8
 Barb Harrington 4/8
 Irina Belikova-Erickson 4/8
 James Chase 4/8
 Launa Epp 4/9
 Anne Halbert 4/9
 John Pershing 4/9
 Cathy Pershing 4/9
 Dennis McPherson 4/9
 Mattie Eddleman 4/11
 Sarah Nottage-Tacey 4/12
 Kevin Junker 4/13



William Hermes 4/13
 Marty Hoch 4/14
 Harold Korb 4/15
 Collin Hermes 4/16
 Jaxen Mitchell 4/17
 Doodle Harris 4/17
 Evelyn Smidt 4/18
 Robert Grams 4/20
 Belinda Nuss 4/20
 Kathy Warriner 4/21
 Kenny Graham 4/22
 Jenni Bauer 4/22
 Marsha Nelson 4/23
 Norah Snell 4/24
 Gary Whitcomb 4/24
 Elaine Specht 4/26
 Brett Miller 4/26
 Thomas Kerr 4/27
 Curtis Reimer 4/27
 Dave Johnson 4/27
 Kristan Manske 4/29
 Julia Reimer 4/30

Wells Fargo Checks

We have received two checks in the mail from Wells Fargo that didn't have names on them. With them not having names we don't know who to credit them to. Please let the church office know if you have had checks sent to the church from Wells Fargo.

Happy April Anniversary

Marcia & Mike Hogan 4/2/1983
 Jodi & Danny Graves 4/6/2002
 Belinda & Paul Nuss 4/8/1978
 Tammy & Todd Lay 4/11/1987
 Judy & Marty Hoch 4/21/1979
 Vera & Dan Zabloudil 4/21/1973
 Colleen & George Adam 4/26/1975
 Mary & Jorn Olsen 4/26/1975
 Sandra & Dave Dirks 4/29/1989



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

Chancel Choir Director: Dr. Miggi Angangco

Chancel Bells & Calvin/Westminster

Bells Director: Dr. Byron Jensen

Calvin/Westminster Choir Director: Linda Johnson

Praise/Alleluia Choir Director: 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