



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HASTINGS

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST SINCE 1873

Home Page Newsletter

Why I Call First Presbyterian Church a “Purple Church”

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

In my sermon on Sunday, I referred to First Presbyterian Church of Hastings as a “purple church.” Over the years, that phrase has become an important way for me to describe who we are and who we are striving to be as a congregation.

At one level, the phrase is fairly straightforward. In our current political climate, we often talk about “red states” and “blue states,” red voters and blue voters, red counties and blue counties. Purple, of course, is what happens when red and blue are brought together. It symbolizes a community made up of people with different perspectives, experiences, convictions, and political viewpoints. And that certainly describes our church. Within our congregation are Democrats, Republicans, Independents, and people who are weary of politics altogether. We do not all think alike. We do not all vote alike. We do not all see every issue in the same way.

And yet, week after week, we gather around the same baptismal font, the same communion table, the same scriptures, and the same Lord. We sit side by side in the pews and sing hymns together. But there is also a deeper and more important meaning behind the phrase “purple church.”

Purple is one of the great liturgical colors of the Christian faith. During the seasons of Advent and Lent, the sanctuary is filled with purple cloth on the communion table and pulpit and the pastors wear purple stoles. Purple marks seasons of reflection, repentance, preparation, and spiritual renewal. These are seasons when the church intentionally focuses its attention on the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That second meaning is doubly important to me. Because ultimately, what makes us a “purple church” is not politics. It is our identity as disciples of Jesus Christ.

We are a purple church when we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus rather than the endless divisions and tribalism of our culture. We are a purple church when our identity as Christians becomes more important than our identity as partisans. We are a purple church when we refuse to let political labels become more important than the commandment to love one another. In a world that increasingly tells us to sort ourselves into opposing camps, the church is called to be something different.

The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 4:1–3 (NRSV): “Lead a life worthy of the calling to which

Continued



you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

And Jesus tells his disciples in John 13:34–35 (NRSV): “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Notice what Jesus does not say. He does not say the world will know we are his disciples because we all agree on every issue. He does not say the world will know us by our political uniformity. He says the world will know us by our love.

That kind of love is not always easy. It requires humility. Listening. Grace. Patience. Curiosity. Forgiveness. It requires seeing one another not as enemies to defeat, but as fellow children of God created in the image of God. That is holy work. And I believe First Presbyterian Church of Hastings has been trying to do that holy work for many years.

We are not perfect. We still disagree. We still wrestle with difficult questions. But we continue to gather together in worship, prayer, mission, fellowship, and service. We continue to pack meals, serve neighbors, welcome strangers, study scripture, sing hymns, baptize children, share communion, and care for one another. In other words, we continue trying to be the church.

And when we keep Jesus Christ at the center of our life together, something remarkable happens: red and blue begin to fade into a deeper and more meaningful color. The color of Advent. The color of Lent. The color of discipleship. The color of a family of faith seeking to follow Jesus together. Let’s keep being a purple church.

Your purple servant in Christ,

Pastor Greg

This book tells the story of one congregation in the heart of the Midwest and what it can teach about hope in a divided world.

In a time when politics and faith often drive people apart, and the electoral map is divided into red and blue states, this book offers a different vision: a purple church where conservatives and liberals sit in the same pews, sing the same hymns, and serve side by side. Through stories of sack lunches, shared tables, prayer vigils, cultural partnerships, and courageous conversations, this church shows how communities can resist the pull of polarization and discover the joy of building the beloved community together. Each chapter tells a heart-warming story of finding common ground and concludes with discussion questions and a brief biblical reflection, perfect for a book group or Bible study.

Pastor Greg Wrote a Book!

*Purple Church, Red State:
Finding Common Ground in an Age of Polarization*

It is available in the Hands Around the World Store and Church Office. All proceeds benefit the mission projects and ministry partners of First Presbyterian Church of Hastings.



IT'S TIME FOR SPRING CLEANING IN YOUR CLOSET. THE MISSION COMMITTEE IS COLLECTING LONG-SLEEVED SHIRTS FOR OUR MIGRANT WORKERS.

THESE SHIRTS ARE IMPORTANT TO PROTECT OUR WORKERS FROM THE SUN AND EXPOSURE TO AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS.

SHIRTS CAN BE DROPPED OFF IN THE DESIGNATED BIN IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.

THE MISSION COMMITTEE THANKS YOU.

Happy Anniversary June



- Sharon & John Brooks- 6/1/1980
- Chanda & Stan Essink- 6/2/2000
- Lindsey & Ethan Stout- 6/2/2012
- Lynette & Paul Krieger- 6/2/1973
- Ginny & Will Locke- 6/3/1961
- Cheryl & Ed Lockwood- 6/6/1970
- Connie & LaVern Franzen- 6/7/1964
- Jamie & Patrick Hickok- 6/8/2002
- Kathy & Curtis Reimer- 6/10/1989
- Bonnie & Kenton Grams- 6/11/1977
- Michelle & Rob Kerr- 6/12/1993
- Erica & Brent Brooks- 6/14/1997
- Kristen & Louie Eckhardt- 6/19/2010
- Sandra & C.L. Wimer- 6/24/1967
- Diane & Doug Phelps- 6/24/1978
- Mary & Jerry Seiler- 6/26/1976
- Mary & Jim Lewis- 6/27/1964
- Gary & Carol Grummert- 6/27/1965
- Joyce & Thomas Moore- 6/30/1979
- Katie & Sung Shin- 6/30/2007

May & June Ushers and Greeters

May Ushers (Team #3) Captain – Dave Fisher, Andrew Barrows, Phil Odom, Doug Soderquist, John Pershing

May Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
31	Ann & Robin Koozer	Carol Harrenstein

June Ushers (Team #4) Captain – George Howard, Susie Graham, Dixie McDonald, Gale McDonald

June Greeters	Memorial Room	Narthex
7	Connie & Richard McClenahan	Jean Stinnete
14	Erica & Brent Brooks	Jan Bolliger
21	Cheryl & Ed Lockwood	Susan Cole
28	Karen & Richard Doerr	Mary Kay LaMaster

United Harvest June Distribution Date

Volunteers for the United Harvest Mobile Food Pantry! In June, the folks at Foodbank for the Heartland will be delivering our food on the fourth Saturday rather than our usual third Saturday. That will make it Saturday, June 27th.

In July, we will resume our usual third Saturday schedule...July 28th.

April Communion Offering Update

The April Communion Offering raised a total of **\$1,488** which will benefit **PC(USA) One Great Hour of Sharing**. Thank you for your generous support.

June Communion Offering

Open Table

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

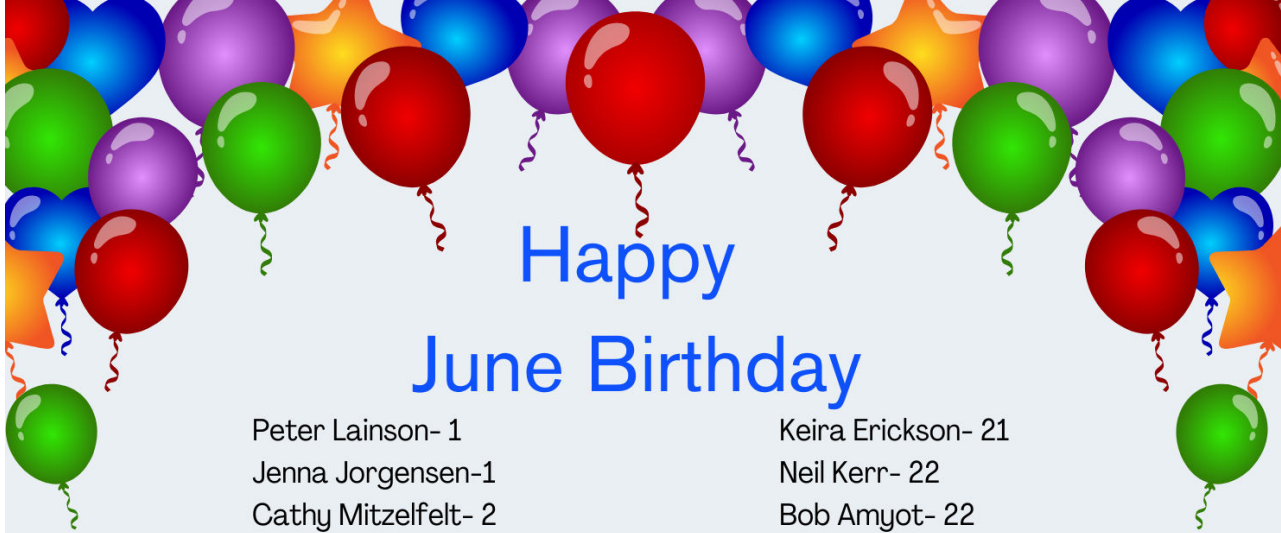
Team 1 (March & September)

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.



Happy June Birthday

Peter Lainson- 1
Jenna Jorgensen-1
Cathy Mitzelfelt- 2
Dick Christensen- 3
Ashley Hermann- 4
Wanda Williams- 4
Bev Stein- 6
Pam Lainson- 6
Jeni Howard- 8
Andrew Barrows- 8
Jody Stutzman- 8
Zach Bridges- 8
Alexis Longshore- 9
Joyce Ore- 10
Genna Little- 10
Shawn Norris- 10
Deb Johnson- 10
John Carlsson- 12
Rikki Ashby- 12
Kaleena Fong- 12
Charles Hafer- 13
Laurie Lofquist- 13
Bruce Phelps- 14
Tenley Hermann- 14
Janna Johnson- 14
Kris Norris- 15
Sam Boyd- 15
Julia Boyd- 15
Nathan Kerr- 16
Courtney Junker- 16

Keira Erickson- 21
Neil Kerr- 22
Bob Amyot- 22
Doug Oakeson- 23
Claire Schwarz- 23
Jan Schawang- 24
Connie Hansen Golter- 25
Tom Kreager- 25
Jill Kramer- 26
Colleen Schukei- 26
Rory Stout- 26
Jim Boeve- 26
Carol Harrenstein- 26
Jim Lewis- 27
Jodie Phelps- 28
Kelsey Kamarad- 28
Dianne Christensen- 29
Gabriel Snell- 30
Ruth Nielsen- 30
Everly Hogan- 16
Lorri Oakeson- 16
LaJeanne Boehler- 16
Sally Smith- 18
Amanda Turner- 18
Leah Ratzlaff- 18
Ian Erickson- 18
Eric Brader- 18
Judy Hoch- 19
Rebecca McPherson-21

May 26, 2026 – June 6, 2026

Tues. 5/26	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity Meeting	Room 203
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	6pm	UNL Extension-Latino Women	PEACE SW Classroom
Wed. 5/27	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	basement
Thur. 5/28	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Fri. 5/29	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Sun. 5/31	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, Radio, YouTube
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library
Mon. 6/1	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE Quilting Room
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	6-7:30pm	WAM Meeting	Anderson Room
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains	Choir Room
Tues. 6/2	10:30am	Staff Meeting	In person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	United Harvest Meeting	PEACE NW Classroom
Wed. 6/3	12pm	Noonday Book Club	Sbrooks52@gmail.com for link
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers Meet	Basement
Thur. 6/4	5:30pm	Global Mission Committee Meeting	PEACE NW Classroom
	6pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
Fri. 6/5	10am	Mahjong Ladies	Basement Youth Room
Sun. 6/6	10am	HAW Store Open	Library
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, Radio, YouTube
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Library



SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, July 12, 2026

Following the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

PEACE Center Gym

Please join us for a lunch in honor and in celebration of the Allen-Pickett family and their time at First Presbyterian Church of Hastings!



RSVPs ensure we have enough food. Please call or email by July 5th to let us know you'll be there!

(402) 462-5147 • melissa@fpchastings.org



Relay For Life

Relay for Life has been a way for our church family to remember loved ones we have lost to cancer and to honor those who have survived. At the same time, we support the American Cancer Society.

Luminaries can be purchased by filling out a form and submitting it with your donation (\$10 each) to our First Presbyterian Church team through our church office or to our team captain, Susie Graham. (402) 469-2638. Please make checks payable to American Cancer Society.

Luminaries will be displayed in our Sanctuary in early June and at the Relay for Life in Kearney at the Kearney Catholic High School track (110 E 35th St.) on June 5. Thank you.

American Cancer Society
Relay for Life of Central Nebraska

Your name _____

Your Phone # _____

Yes, I would like _____ luminaries at \$10 each.

Name of Individual being honored or remembered	In Honor	In Memory	Donation
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Please pray for

Elaine Schumacher
Tarah Davis & family
Matt Campbell
Janey Nottage-Tacey
Bob Wolf
KyMani Riek
Carole Pedersen
Tony Glenn
Judd Carrier

Molly Kammerer and family
Carl Utley
Barry Thomson
Greg Howard
Lexi Longshore
Nytha & Dave Glass
family of Ramona Shetler
family of Becky Foote
Kathy Struss

Pat Kelley
Mary Lewis
Zsuzsanna Fazakas
Pam Canady
Francisco Diaz (Beto)
Carter Johnson
Alyssa Donley
Ken Fisk
Sammy Nahorny

In memory of

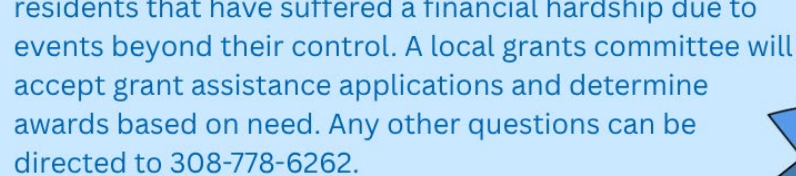
Ramona Shetler, who passed away on 4/3/26



P.W. Father's Day Offering

Every year the Presbyterian Women collect an offering in honor of, or in memory of, our fathers. We will be set up in the Memorial Room at church for four Sundays (May 31, June 7, June 14, and June 21.) We have decided that this year the offering will go to wildfire relief in the sandhills of Nebraska. If you remember, in March, The Morrill wildfire burned at least 643,074 acres of land. It destroyed the grasslands, fencing, homes, and animals. Thank you for your continued support.

Nebraska Sandhill Rancher Fire Relief



Our mission statement: The primary purpose of the fund shall be to assist victims of natural fires in Nebraska, primarily in the counties of Garden, Morrill, Arthur, Keith, and Grant. To assist in disaster recovery. We hope to enhance and improve the quality of life of the Nebraska residents that have suffered a financial hardship due to events beyond their control. A local grants committee will accept grant assistance applications and determine awards based on need. Any other questions can be directed to 308-778-6262.

VBS 2026



THE SEARCH FOR GODLY TREASURES

JUNE 22-25
8:30-11:30 AM

INCOMING
PREK-5TH GRADERS

Join us for a 4-day adventure to find the
treasures of God's Kingdom!

All are welcome!

Register online fpchastings.org

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
Chancel Choir Director: Dr. Miggi Angangco
Chancel Bells & Youth Bells
Director: Dr. Byron Jensen
Youth Choir Director: Linda Johnson
Kids Choir Director: Teresa Canady
Kids 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
Custodian: Keidy Debbe
Bookkeeper: Deb Hamburger
Scholar in Residence: Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh