



Mission Statement of 1st Presbyterian Church, Hastings

Following Christ, we strive to love and serve the world so that all may grow in faith and experience true joy.



More Good News

Dec. 2016

Volume 17, #12

December at a Glance

Dec. 4

9:30 AM Bell Practice
10:30 AM Worship w/communion
Scripts order due

Dec. 6

Session w/ Deacons 6:30 PM

Dec. 7, 14, 21 and 28

Bible Study w/supper 6 PM

Dec. 7 and 14

Youth Group 6:00 PM

Dec. 13

Bell Choir Practice 9:30 AM
10:30 AM Worship
Lessons and Carols
Potluck after church
Christmas caroling with Deacons

Dec. 15

Newsletter Deadline

Dec. 18

10:30 AM Worship
5 PM Blue Christmas Service

Dec. 24

8 PM Worship

Dec. 25

10:30 AM Informal Worship

Dec. 27

Pastor April on KDWA
11:00 am - 12:00 pm

From the Pastor's Desk

Grace and Gratitude

Grace and gratitude are two fairly simple and innocuous words but they pack volumes into their few syllables. When I think of these two words I am reminded of running a marathon. Although that seems illogical, hear me out. I recently completed running my second marathon and I couldn't have done it without grace and gratitude. It was grace that helped me persevere. It was gratitude for time to train. When running or training for anything in life, we need a plan and we need people who help us and support us in our endeavors. We need encouragement to work hard even when things seem overwhelming, because putting in the long miles feel impossible. We need grace to give ourselves permission to rest and permission to push through the task at hand even if time is limited.

Presently I am also running a different marathon of sorts, one for which there is no training available, one which you might be able to relate to a little better than actually running 26.3 miles, that being a family member having a catastrophic health crisis. We never really plan for how our lives will be impacted when words like "grim prognosis" or "forty percent survival" are tossed about by doctors as though they are ships bouncing off the waves. My father was up visiting Minnesota from Lincoln, Nebraska to watch me run the Twin Cities Marathon on October 9, 2016. After not feeling well, I took him to the emergency room in the evening where he was subsequently transferred to Regions for emergency life-saving surgery. What happened next was nineteen days in Intensive Care and he still remains hospitalized. I am thrilled to report that he does seem to be doing better; however, we don't know when he will finish his rehabilitation and be released to go home. As you can see this is the marathon no one trains for or plans for. Long hours at the hospital, visits with doctors, navigating a

large health system, stress from the dynamics of family systems, driving to and from work in addition to family obligations paints an entirely new image of time management, team work, and succinct communication.

Grace has come from the congregation I serve and the saints in the church and in the community who have been praying for us. Gratitude goes out to those who care and love and support and pray, as well as, to God for bringing saints into our lives, those people who are selfless and those people in the medical community who have been gifted with skills to care and support those who are hospitalized.

During this season of Advent I truly am living grace and gratitude, are you?

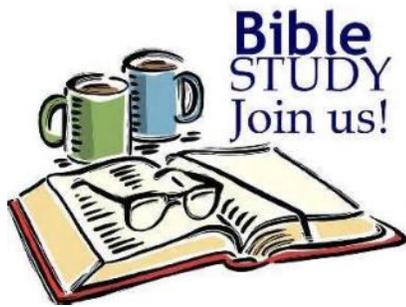
Grace to you, and peace,

April



1st Presbyterian Church of Hastings Core Values

- * Moving and engaging worship
- * Openness in decision-making
- * Deep, life-giving relationships
- * Building and 150 year history as part of our identity
- * Serving the community through mission
- * Courage to take risks and the ability to persevere



Our Bible Study of Favorite Bible stories continues on Wednesdays in December. We will have a light supper starting at 6 PM and then read a story in the Bible. We are currently reading stories from the New Testament. Each session is an independent study so you do not have to have come previously. Please come join us for a time of fellowship and fun as we explore some of the many stories in the Bible.



Believe it or not, the Holidays are here. As in the past, we will have a Gift Tree as part of our ministry with Hastings Family Services. This year we will be buying "generic" gifts for adults, teenagers and children. These gifts are for folks who need/want gifts, but didn't register soon enough to be on the family list. The items should not be wrapped. The lists can be found on the kiosk in the Fellowship Hall or on the Hastings Family Services website. The web addresses are:

Adults:

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/24b8eb13666f2ca01d778cca50e1347e?AccessKeyId=A12459ED836188A11BB2&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Teenagers:

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/cbc70908c869cd009f6dbfaec3558038?AccessKeyId=A12459ED836188A11BB2&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Children:

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/211636a657c8ef39e8f895b5334d03d7?AccessKeyId=A12459ED836188A11BB2&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Please have the items in by December 11th.



Scripts Fund-raising Order

It is time for another Scripts order. April will be submitting a paper order on **Dec. 4**. New participating companies have been added. There are lists and order forms downstairs. Remember each gift card you purchase earns First Presbyterian money.

Please join the Deacons on Sunday, December 11th for an Outreach/Fellowship event. After church we will have a potluck lunch and then go Christmas caroling. Get in the Christmas Spirit as we visit some of our shut-ins.



The Christmas Joy Offering

December 18th



This Advent and Christmas season, we celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, we recognize the wondrous gift Christ has given us, not just in Himself, but also in raising up leaders within our church.

THE WONDROUS GIFT IS GIVEN

Celebrate the gift of Jesus with a gift of your own that will assist church workers in times of need and also develop and educate the future racial ethnic leaders of our church.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS



December 11

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is a service of Christian worship celebrating the birth of Jesus that is traditionally followed at Christmas. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns and choir music.

The first service was in 1878 when the choir of Truro Cathedral sang a service of carols at 10:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Two years later, on Christmas Eve 1880, Edward Benson, the Bishop of Truro (later Archbishop of Canterbury) formalised the service with Nine Lessons in addition to the carols.

The original liturgy has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world.

Blue Christmas **Sunday, Dec. 18th at 5 PM**

For many people, Christmas is a time of loneliness, sorrow, alienation and sadness.

Celebrated near the longest night of the year, this service offers a way to claim those feelings and still feel surrounded by the compassionate love of God.

We are in the middle of a season of great joy and light. But for many, it feels more like a season of great darkness and shadows. The festivities going on around us bring a great contrast to our own situations: loneliness, grief, loss, separation, pain, sickness. At this service, we will gather to acknowledge the contrast we feel inside.

This will be a gathering acknowledging our loss, separation and confusion. It will be a time of quiet reflection that will hopefully lead to some peace and comfort.



It is with a sad heart I write the December newsletter. We will no longer have weekly youth group meetings after December 14th. We have mostly high school students in our group and they are very busy kids with school, sports and jobs and are unable to attend on Wednesday nights. I believe this is my 7th year of involvement and I will truly miss our group. We would like to get together once in awhile to do a mission outing, so stay tuned for more information at a later date. I'd like to thank the congregation for all of their support over the years.

Thanks,

Sonia Christian

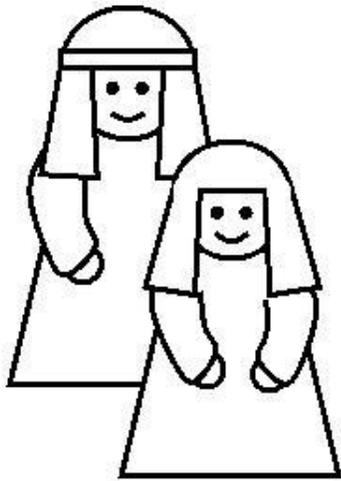
Youth Calendar

December 7th - Park Ridge

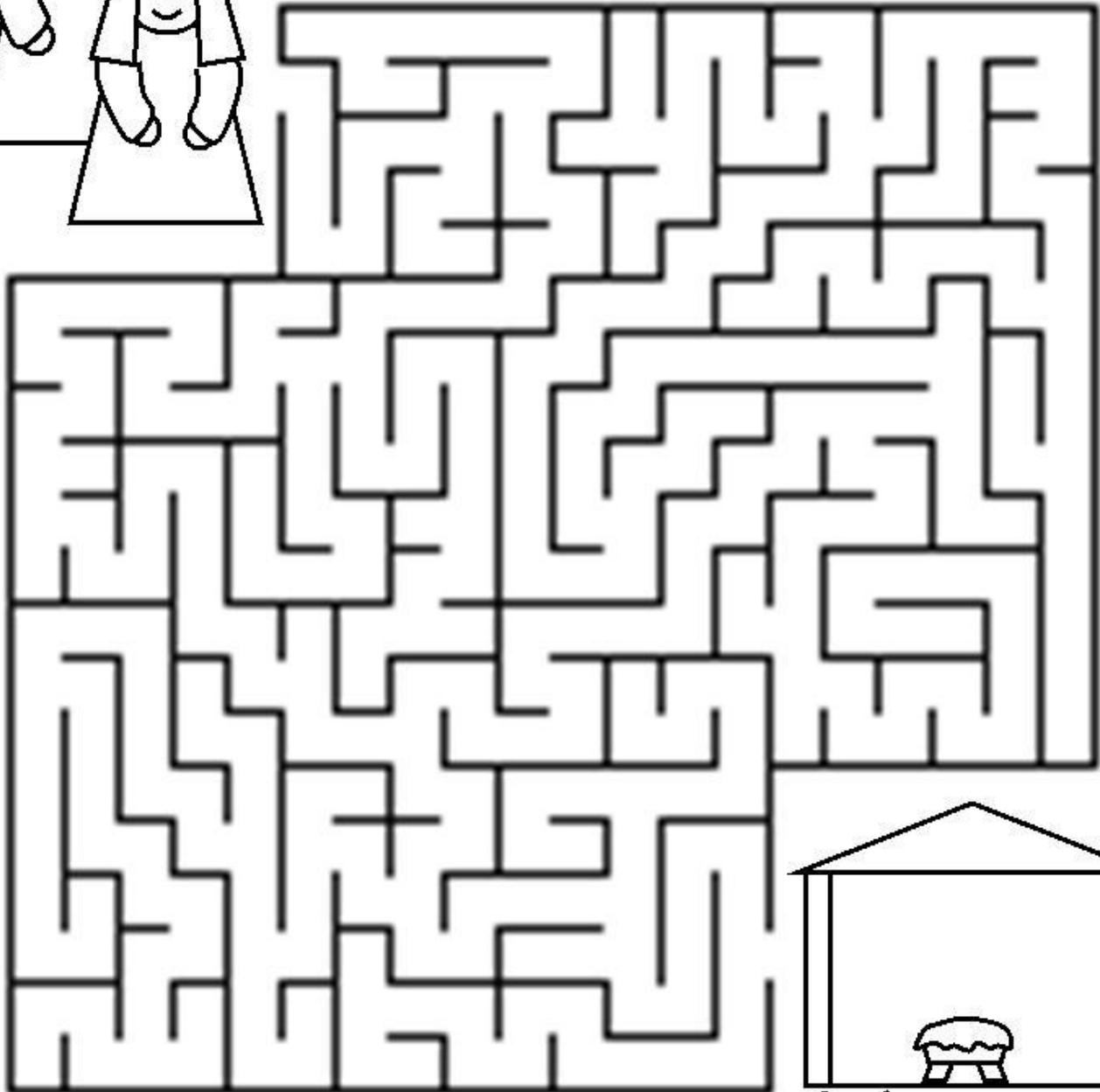
December 14th - Christmas Party

(We are contacting parents to see if we will have enough kids to have the party)

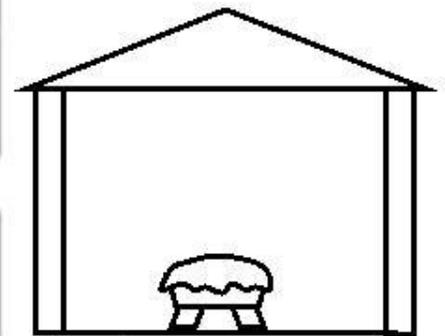
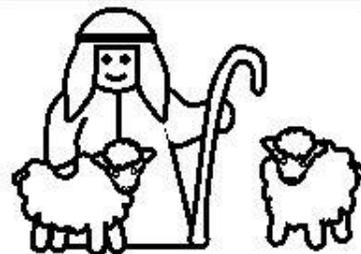
*Merry
Christmas*



Help Mary and Joseph get to the stable.



For more creative learning ideas check out www.makinglearningfun.com



A Christmas Carol

Josiah Gilbert Holland



**There's a song in the air!
There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer
And a baby's low cry!**

**And the star rains its fire while the Beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king.**

**There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth,
For the virgin's sweet boy
Is the Lord of the earth.**

**Ay! the star rains its fire and the Beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king.**



**In the light of that star
Lie the Ages impearled,
And that song from afar
Has swept over the world.**

**Every hearth is aflame, and the Beautiful sing,
In the homes of the nations that Jesus is King.**



**We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night
From the heavenly throng.**

**Ay! we shout to the lovely evangel they bring,
And we greet in his cradle our Savior and King.**



Bible Readings This Month

December 4

Isa. 11: 1-10
Ps. 72: 1-7, 18-19
Rom. 15: 4-13
Matt. 3: 1-12



December 11

Isa. 35: 1-10
Ps. 146: 5-10 or
Luke 1: 46b-55
James 5: 7-10
Matt. 11: 2-11

December 18

Isa. 7: 10-16
Ps. 80: 1-7, 17-19
Rom. 1: 1-7
Matt. 1: 18-25

December 24

Christmas Eve

Isa. 9: 2-7
Ps. 96
Titus 2: 11-14
Luke 2: 1-14 (15-20)

December 25

Isa. 52: 7-10
Ps. 98
Heb. 1: 1-4 (5-12)
John 1: 1-14

December 2016 Servers

	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Leaders
Dec. 4	Becker	Browns	Karen Altpeter
Dec. 11	Tayson/Wittkopf	Blumeyers	Kristin Blevins
Dec. 18	Christians	Caneff	Aimee Fagnant
Dec. 24	Mullins	Rash	Grant Tiefenbruck
Dec. 25	Browns	Tiefenbrucks	Dave Hume

Session Minutes for October 4, 2016

A stated meeting of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, MN was held at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall of the church on October 4, 2016.

The meeting began at 6:30 PM when Reverend Dr. April Davis Campbell lit the Christ Candle to remind us that our calling is as leaders of this congregation and to further God's kingdom on earth. The "devotion" was led by Marcia. 11 Ways to Live was in the news after the finding of Jacob Wetterling's body. Marcia exposed us to "The 7 Tips of a Happy Life." Tell a new story, repeat the good stories, spring clean your belief system, get happy now, be grateful for what you have, create a bliss board, take a leap of faith. The main thing is to trust God as discussed in the reading from Psalm 37. The meeting was then opened with prayer.

Elders Present:

Class of 2016: Carlotta Mullins, Marcia Rash

Class of 2017: Grant Tiefenbruck, Dave Hume

Class of 2018: Dennis Brown, Mary Crawmer

Absent: Brenda Reiter

Clerk's Report: The September Minutes were approved as submitted. Nothing else to report.

Treasurer's Report: There was a duplication of the pension payment in August that fouled up the accounts. Need to rename the Peacemaking Offering to Global Peace and Witness Offering. Expenses are still under good control at this time.

Foundation Report: Grant will ping Bob Albright about a meeting date.

Pastor's Report: Synod meeting: Synod approved transferring money set aside for medical expenses from previous 2015, 2016 to 2017 budgets. A deployed staff person talked about synod/GA statistics. Lay persons (CREs) are serving many smaller churches. The average age of church members is high. April is now the incoming vice moderator of synod. She will be leading a course in Synod School next year. There are 170 presbyteries, and 16 synods. 116 presbyteries have less than 10,000 members. April is working on visitor cards for the gift package that we give to visitors.

Presbytery Meeting: at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton. Dennis thought that attendance seemed much smaller than previously. The Eden Prairie separation issue is getting complicated. Presbytery Leadership Team talked about race relations and what to do. Lisa Largesse (sp), an LGBT person with disabilities, will finally be ordained. Per Capita will increase again next year. The next meeting of Presbytery will be on November 15. Dave and Grant are elected commissioners. Transitional Presbytery Executive Jeff Japinga has offered to come meet with us and talk about new ways to go. April also handled the church registration with the Secretary of State. She will be on a family trip to Nebraska over MEA.

Deacons: Working on their “Thinking of you” cards.

M/S/C to receive all of the reports above on the consent agenda.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds – Dennis – M/S/C to have the Fellowship Hall carpet cleaned using a waterless process and the office. See if they can spot clean in the pastor’s office. Dennis contacted a vendor about developing a proposal for a new church sign. He was given prices starting at \$25,000. We may need to look closer at refurbishing our existing sign.

Fellowship – Brenda – Plans for a visit to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts for the Martin Luther exhibit are being developed.

Christian Education – Sunday school continues with Kaitlin. Bible study starts again tomorrow for the month of October.

Mission – Mary – Christmas activities are being planned: Shoeboxes and Adopt-a-Family

Stewardship/Finance – Marcia Rash – 2017 budget building. A 1.1% raise for pastors is recommended by presbytery. Stewardship Sunday will be November 13. Pledge cards will be designed.

Worship – A Unity Service that will focus on healing after the divisiveness of the election season will be held on November 6 at 5 PM.

Personnel/Nominating – We are starting our effort to contact people.

M/S/C to receive the committee reports.

Old Business – None – still no guidelines for Presbytery grants

New Business - None

The November meeting of Session will be on Tuesday, November 1st at 6:30 PM.

There will be a Joint Meeting of Deacons & Elders on Tuesday, December 6 at 6 PM followed by a meeting of the Session.

Marcia closed the meeting with prayer at 7: 45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Tiefenbruck
Clerk of Session

DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		Bell Choir 6PM	Youth Group 6PM	1	2	3
4 Bell Choir 9:30 AM 10:30 Worship w/Communion Scripts order due	5	6 Session w/ Deacons 6:30 PM	7 Youth Group 6PM Bible Study 6 PM	8	9	10
11 Bell Choir 9:30 AM 10:30 Worship Lessons and Carols Potluck Christmas Caroling	12	13	14 Youth Group 6PM Christmas Party Bible Study 6 PM	15	16  Dave Hume	17
18 10:30 Worship Blue Christmas 5 PM	19 Bell Choir 6PM	20	21 Bible Study 6 PM	22  John Lewis	23	24  Christmas Eve Worship 8 PM
25  Merry Christmas! 10:30 Worship Informal Worship	26	27 Pastor April on KDWA 11am-12pm	28 Bible Study 6 PM	29	30	31  Carolyn Blumeyer