



**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

**August 2017**  
**Volume 18, #8**

## From the Pastor's Desk

New beginnings – whether it's a new job, a new relationship, a new home, or just a new outfit of clothes - are always filled with a sense of both expectation and uncertainty. There is a hope for something special and new that proves satisfying and fulfilling and meets our expectations. And there is often a bit of hesitation for fear that the new thing will not live up to the former things, that it will be less than what we hoped for, and then all those questions of "what if...?" that keep nagging at us.

The new beginning for a pastor is similar on both sides of the pulpit. The congregation wonders if she or he will be a good preacher? Will this new minister be able to understand the community and what makes this congregational special? Will he or she have habits or behaviors that annoy us or get in the way of our working together? The new pastor is wondering how this new congregation will receive his or her sermons? Will they be a challenging or easy-going group? How will the session meetings be? Will people like me?

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, we will embark on this journey together: I as your new transitional pastor and you as the congregation I am called to serve. We are hopeful for the future, and uncertain of each other. I understand this expectation and hesitation and I share it with you. But at the same time, I am trusting that God is in the midst of what we are doing together, and that with the Holy

### August at a Glance

#### August 6

10:30 AM Worship  
w/ Communion

#### August 3

Session 6:30 PM

#### August 13

10:30 AM Worship  
School Supplies due

#### August 15

Newsletter Deadline

#### August 20

10:30 AM Worship

#### August 27

10:30 Worship in the Park  
and Potluck Picnic  
Schaar's Bluff  
in Spring Lake Park

presence, we cannot be altogether wrong for each other.

Our God is always about new beginnings: bringing life out of death or raising up dry bones to dance again. I am certain that God is about this new beginning of me serving as your Transitional Pastor. And I trust that what God is about, will turn out just fine.

So I welcome your comments, questions, instructions, and stories as I begin my work among you. I look forward to getting to know you personally and to hearing about the things that excite you about First Presbyterian Church of Hastings. I hope that along the way you will get to know me as well. And that together we will be about the new things that God is doing in Hastings.

Yours in Christ,

Steve



## 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

## Notes from FPCH Listening Session of July 16, 2017

This modified worship service was led by the Session and the Rev. Denise Dunbar-Perkins, representative from the Presbytery. She also moderated the listening session.

Denise began by describing the purpose of this gathering: to invite the full engagement and input of the congregation in considering the possibilities and challenges of the church and what the options are for the future.

This was followed by an opportunity for each attendee to introduce themselves by name, length of time in the church, and role, if any, in the congregation. Twelve years was the shortest time of membership of those present and extend up to a lifetime for at least one member.

Denise then asked the Session to describe what they saw as concerns for FPCH. Mentioned were concerns about decreasing attendance and financial support, having a people deficit – there are only so many people to do tasks; we are out of our comfort zone in trying to figure out where to go next; the church is like a family to many in the congregation, and we appear to be at a turning point. Steve and Denise have brought positivity and light to this discussion.

Denise stressed that no decisions were being made here today. The purpose was to hear about the heart and desires of this church.

She then introduced the Rev. Dr. Stephen Robertson to the congregation as our new transitional pastor. His role today was to be an observer, but as a transitional pastor, it is to listen to us, lead worship and be involved with the congregation and the community.

This question then was presented to the group: **“What do you love most about this church?”**

### Responses included:

It is always friendly here; at some point here, everyone is or has been touched by someone in the pew; someone is always here for you.

This is family here, a relationship. This church has been here since before the Civil War. I believe God is not done with this church yet.

We are NOT in conflict.

The second question was: **“What worries you most about its future?”**

### Responses included:

Finances. We need money.

Numbers in attendance

Influence of Age – our ability to do tasks and fund the future

No young people.

Denise offered this as a thought: People of a certain age CAN come together in community; perhaps one could look at a future *without* the focus being on young people.

Others said:

We need to look at our future differently.

We have been known by our outreach in the community. We have gotten away from this. Again, perhaps this is caused by the people deficit.

Perhaps a non-traditional service is the answer.

The grant and programing for bringing art and music into the church is now in limbo. Would that have helped?

Resistance to change may not be the issue here. We have tried numerous things over time.

We are known for our garage sale.

There is a personal touch here in this place.

Denise offered that Evangelical churches are growing, because of marketing. They increase numbers, but their goal is to grow churches. No commitment is required. They may not see ministry the same as mainline churches where growing “ministry” is what we do. Research shows as 20-40’s age, they return from evangelical to mainline churches.

Another question was this: **“Has the ministry here been completed?”** “The general feeling was “Heavens, NO!”

Denise summarized the session this way:

The Presbytery is here to support you. It is not the role of the Presbytery to decide if FPCH is viable or not. But they are here to help us make a decision about our future. The Presbytery doesn’t have answers for individual churches. You know your own individual community. Presbytery can offer resources if they have them, but they will not close us down.

Denise then asked Steve for his comments. He offered this:

We are not the first congregation to experience challenges. We can learn from one another. Steve in his role as Treasurer for the Presbytery, is aware of these congregations and is hopeful that we can come together to share our concerns. He would hope we also have conversations with other congregations in our community, to see if they have similar concerns, and if there might be opportunities there. There will be successes and some failures. Some might work here, some might not. His sense is that this church wants to BE!

Other comments at this stage were:

There is a lot of heart here.

The history here counts for something.

The front door stone is worn down by all the people who’ve been a part of this place.

We need a better sound system. There are dead spots in the sanctuary where it is very hard to hear.

First Pres greets you when you cross the bridge!

A lot of locals don’t know this church. If you say you go to the Presbyterian Church, they say, “which one is that?”

## Next Steps

1. Hear the stories. Make the foundational connection.
2. Steve will be here to listen and walk with us.
3. The Presbytery will be here to support us on the path, whatever it turns out to be.
4. There ARE going to be next steps. That's the Good News



Summer is almost over which means that it is time to collect school supplies for HFS. Lists of needed items are on the table in the Fellowship Hall. All supplies are due at the church by August 13th.



**Come join us on August 27th for our annual Outdoor Worship Service at Spring Lake Park (Schaar's Bluff).**

**A potluck picnic will follow. We'll be at the small shelter near the playground. Rain or shine, we always have a good day at the park. Plan now to join us.**



*Welcome Dr. Stephen Robertson on Sunday August 6<sup>th</sup>. He officially begins on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Contact information for Steve is:*

*Email: [stevempls@icloud.com](mailto:stevempls@icloud.com)*

*Cell: 612-655-7594*



**POSITION DESCRIPTION & CONTRACT  
HALF-TIME TRANSITIONAL PASTOR  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Hastings, Minnesota**

**PURPOSE:**

To give spiritual, pastoral, educational, and administrative leadership to the congregation as it determines its future direction and considers appropriate longer-term leadership needs.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:**

The Half-time Transitional Pastor is accountable to the congregation through the Session for the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the position description, and to the Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**A. Pastoral (50%)**

1. Plan and lead worship and preach on Sundays and at other special services throughout the church year.
2. Accompany and assist the Deacons in their ministry of visiting hospitalized, shut-in, , in-active, and prospective members and members in crisis situations.
3. Perform duties of a minister of word and sacrament, including baptism, communion, marriages, and funerals.
4. Assist and encourage the congregation in its work of Christian Education and to lead a periodic adult bible study.

**B. Administrative (25%)**

1. To serve as a resource person to all Session members and Committees in their program planning and activities implementation. The pastor is welcome and encouraged, but not required, to attend committee meetings. Committees will give regular updates to the Pastor.

2. Provide a written report of the pastor's activities at each Session meeting.
3. Moderate at Session and congregation meetings.
4. Provide for effective communication throughout the congregation.

**C. Other responsibilities (25%)**

1. Work with the Session and congregation to discern the future direction of the church and define goals and timelines for moving forward.
2. Represent the congregation in the community with clergy groups, on KDWA radio, and in other settings as appropriate and available.
3. Participate regularly in Presbytery meetings and work.

**D. Schedule**

1. The above responsibilities are to be fulfilled based on a 20-hour work week. Crisis situations and emergencies may demand additional hours, and the Pastor is authorized to adjust his schedule accordingly.
2. The Transitional Pastor will be provided 4 weeks of vacation (including 4 Sundays) and 2 weeks of Continuing Education (including 2 Sundays).
3. The Transitional Pastor's primary responsibility is planning and leading worship and preaching for both Sunday and special worship services (Maundy Thursday, Christmas Eve, etc.) throughout the year. He will plan for worship and arrange for pulpit supply on those Sundays he is away for vacation and continuing education. From time-to-time but no more than once per month, he may invite outside speakers or pulpit supply to share in worship leadership and/or to preach on Sunday when he is also present.

**RELATIONSHIPS:** The half-time Transitional Pastor will be an ex-officio member of all church committees and will work closely with the Session and Deacons. The half-time Transitional Pastor will be a member of the Presbytery and will be expected to participate in the life and work of that body.

**EVALUATION:** The Session will conduct an annual review and evaluation.

**TERM:** The half-time Transitional Pastor shall serve for a period of one year beginning August 1, 2017, with the

option of extension at the request of the Session and with the approval of the Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry. The half-time Transitional Pastor contract may be terminated by either the Session or the Transitional Pastor with thirty days written notice.

**TERMS OF CALL:** The annual compensation package provided by the congregation is as follows:

Housing Allowance	\$13,150
Retirement Savings Contribution	<u>\$24,000</u>
Effective Salary	\$37,150

Board of Pensions (pension only 11%) \$ 4,087

The Transitional Pastor will also be provided with Vouchered Expense Reimbursement as follows:

Continuing Education Reimbursement	\$600/year
Mileage Reimbursement	\$800/year
Professional Expense Reimbursement	\$400/year

Approved by Session on June 27, 2017    Approved by Committee on Ministry on July \_\_, 2017

Grant Tiefenbruck

Stephen Robertson

Clerk of Session

Half-Time Transitional Pastor

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Committee on Ministry

## Session Minutes for May 2, 2017

**A stated meeting of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, MN was held at 6:35 PM in the Fellowship Hall of the church on May 2, 2017.**

The meeting began at 6:35 PM when Moderator Reverend Dr. April Davis Campbell lit the Christ Candle to remind us that we have come to listen for God's word to direct the work of this congregation. Dennis led devotions. He read from Isaiah 1: 1-3. God created people, and loves them unconditionally. Of course people have rejected God's will. Then he read Isaiah 40: 1-5, the familiar verses from the beginning of Advent. Two choices from God: obey me and prosper or ignore me and suffer the consequences. We hope to be mindful to choose God's path in our work tonight. The meeting was then opened with prayer.

### **Elders Present:**

Class of 2017: Grant Tiefenbruck, Dave Hume

Class of 2018: Dennis Brown, Mary Crawmer

Class of 2019: Brenda Reiter, Karen Altpeter

**Clerk's Report:** The April Session Minutes were approved as submitted except for a correction to the date for the June meeting to the 13<sup>th</sup>. Ryan Fagnant has still not contacted me about his Eagle Scout Service Project.

**Treasurer's Report:** Foundation money for the sign has been received. An initial deposit is needed to get the ball rolling for the new sign. Marcia Rash sent an email suggesting that we divert our usual infusion of Foundation money for the operating budget to cover the new sign deposit, since we don't need the money from the Foundation this month. Our new treasurer has finished being trained. For the month of May, we shall need to pay her with a paper check to avoid incurring an additional payroll check charge. Insurance premium is due at the end of this month.

**Foundation Report:** No report this month.

**Pastor's Report:** The Janice Larson piano class recital will be on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Coverage for the event was planned. Thanks to Mary, Dennis, and Dave. April was just installed as vice-moderator of the Synod. She ran a meeting where the "Administrative Manual" was approved. They studied a book called, "Waking Up White" about privilege and racism. Reparations seem to be at the heart of a lot of these discussions. April asked, "Where are the people with different experiences in Hastings?" A long discussion about racism and current events in Hastings ensued.

The Pastor's Corner newspaper column was due today, and April did not even know the schedule. She will be going to Indiana this week to work on her writing. She will share contact information for the relief pastor.

**Presbytery Meeting:** No meeting in April.

**Deacons:** No report this month.

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

### **Committee Reports**

**Building and Grounds** – Dennis – It has been all about the sign. The sign will be new, but the supporting structure and concrete pad will be reused. Some pruning of the tree will help with visibility from the northbound lanes on Vermillion Avenue.

**Fellowship** – Brenda – An ordination service needs to be planned. She'll plan a nice fellowship hour reception for that. A birthday theme is planned for Fellowship this Sunday. Robert Hamilton and Helen Ott will be celebrating birthdays soon.

**Christian Education** – Kaitlin Christian should be recognized for service as a Sunday School teacher this year.

**Mission** – Mary – Sign-up sheets for t-shirts for the Rivertown Days Parade need to be posted. Prayer Shawl meetings have been on a hiatus lately.

**Stewardship/Finance** – Per Capita will be sent to Presbytery when Marcia gets settled again.

**Personnel/Nominating** – No report this month.

**Worship** – Karen - No special worship items. June 4<sup>th</sup> is Pentecost. Bell Choir will be playing at the service.

M/S/C to receive the committee reports.

**Old Business** – None

**New Business** – None

Mary signed up for devotions in June.

There will be a meeting of Session on June 13, 2017 at 6:30 PM at the church.  
There will be a meeting of Session on August 1, 2017 at 6:30 PM at the church.

Dennis closed the meeting with prayer at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Tiefenbruck  
Clerk of Session

## Bible Readings This Month

### August 6

Gen. 32: 22-31  
 Ps. 17: 1-7, 15  
 Rom. 9: 1-5  
 Matt. 14: 13-21



### August 13

Gen. 37: 1-4, 12-28  
 Ps. 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b  
 Rom. 10: 5-15  
 Matt. 14: 22-33

### August 20

Gen. 45: 1-15  
 Ps. 133  
 Rom. 11: 1-2a, 29-32  
 Matt. 15: (10-20) 21-28

### August 27

Ex. 1: 8-2: 10  
 Ps. 124  
 Rom. 12: 1-8  
 Matt. 16: 13-20

## August 2017 Servers

	<b>Greeters</b>	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Lay Leaders</b>
<b>August 6</b>	Rashes	Brenda Reiter	Becky Tiefenbruck
<b>August 13</b>	Carlotta Mullins	Mary Crawmer	Marcia Caneff
<b>August 20</b>	Kristin Blevins	Browns	Marcia Rash
<b>August 27</b>	Outdoor Worship	Humes	Dennis Brown

Communion Server: Brenda Reiter  
 Deacons: Carolyn Blumeyer and Becky Tiefenbruck



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3 Session 6:30 PM	4	5  Baily Dymacek
6 10:30 Worship w/Communion	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 10:30 Worship School Supplies due	14  Karly Whipple	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship  Brenda Reiter	21  Sara Dymacek	22	23  Dawn McNamara	24	25	26
27 10:30 Worship Schaar's Bluff in Spring Lake Park  Potluck Picnic	28	29	30	31		