

# THE MESSENGER

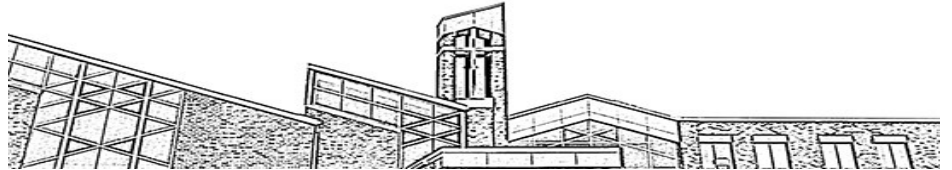
January 2024

The First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, MI

405 N. M-37 HIGHWAY - HASTINGS, MI 49058

## WELCOME

We are so blessed to know you, and to serve alongside you! We hope The Messenger brings everyone closer together, and helps YOU to stay connected at FPC!



## Worship Schedule

Jan. 7	<b>Matthew 2:1-12</b> <b>Mark 1:4-11</b> <b>Communion Sunday</b>	Rev. Nick Marlatt
Jan. 14	<b>John 1:43-51</b>	Rev. Nick Marlatt
Jan. 21	<b>Luke 4:16-30</b>	Rev. Nick Marlatt
Jan. 28	<b>Mark 2:1-12</b>	Rev. Nick Marlatt

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**1/1**

New Year's Day  
Office Closed

**1/11**

Men's Bible Study Begins  
9 am

**1/14**

Pancake Breakfast  
11:15 am

**1/15**

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**2/1**

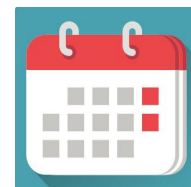
Red Cross Blood Drive

## DEADLINES

Bulletin - Wednesdays by noon

Newsletter- 3rd Wednesday

Ministry Minutes- 3rd Wednesday



*Click on the calendar to see upcoming events and meetings.*



Live services can be reached if you click on image above or go to the church's website, [www.firstchurchhastings.org](http://www.firstchurchhastings.org).  
Look for, and click on, the Facebook image.

# Pastor's Corner

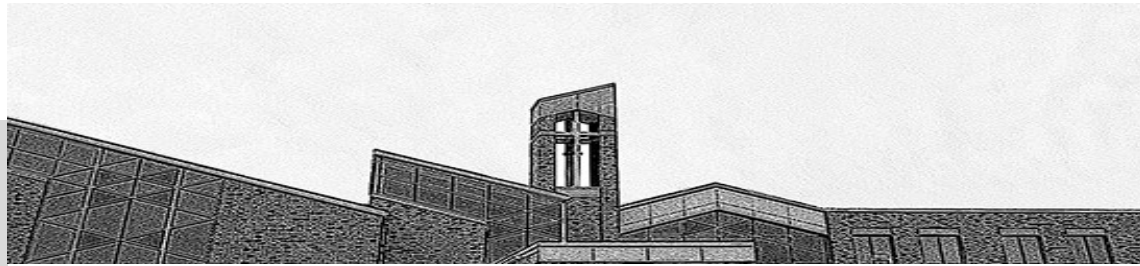


**Pastor Nick Marlatt x3003**  
[nmarlatt@firstchurchhastings.org](mailto:nmarlatt@firstchurchhastings.org)

If you would like pastoral care, counseling, spiritual direction, aid, assistance, or a request added to the prayer chain, please call the church during business hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am - 4:00pm. Speak to Julia. We will connect you to the correct person within the church or community for your specific request.

Emergencies occurring after normal business hours, please contact Pastor Nick at (360) 927-3782

We can lend a helping hand if you reach out. We are here for you.



To all God's beloved children at First Presbyterian Church,

I hope and pray this finds you all well during this Christmas season. I also hope you find a bit of time to reflect on where God has been present in 2023 and reorient yourself toward God in 2024. I usually try to find a bit of time to get outside for a walk, reflect on the previous year and write down what I am grateful for. One of the things I am most grateful for (and one of the ways I have seen God at work in my life) is God leading us to Hastings and to you all here at First Presbyterian. Kortney and the girls and I have so enjoyed our time here, getting to know all of you and this wonderful community. We look forward to many years of ministry and mission together with you.

As we look forward to 2024, we continue to experiment with opportunities to help us grow in our faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ. One of the reasons the Church exists is to help form or shape individuals enter into relationship with God by being involved in Christian community. We do this in corporate worship each Sunday, as well as participating in Christian community through small groups. We are excited to launch our small groups here at the church, which we are calling CARE groups. CARE is an acronym which stands for Connection, Access, Relevance, and Evangelism. We grow in our Christian identity by Connecting, gathering together regularly to grow in our relationship with each other and God. We grow in our Christian identity by caring for our physical and spiritual needs through Accessing the power of our church community. We grow in our Christian identity by growing in our knowledge of Scripture and Relevantly applying it to our daily lives. Finally, we grow in our Christian identity by sharing our faith with each other and our neighbor through Evangelism—sharing our faith in word and deed. Like the concern groups in years past, we hope and pray these CARE groups will strengthen and encourage our faith so that we can sustain the legacy of FPC of changed hearts and lives for Jesus.

We also learn from and adjust based on our experiments. We don't want to experiment and make changes for the sake of making change. We want our experiments to direct what we do and how we do it. To that end, I will begin a Sunday morning Sunday School class again. We learned that the pre-recorded Sunday School videos were not as widely accepted as we wanted, and most folks prefer meeting together in-person on Sunday mornings. Therefore, I will begin leading an in-person Sunday School class on Sunday mornings before worship at 8:30am beginning Sunday January 14. Our first topic will be a bit of an overview to the background of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many folks have asked about the recent fighting in Gaza and how Biblical Israel and modern-day Israel are connected. The goal will be to provide some background and look at how our faith connects to the current conflict in the middle east.

Keep your eyes peeled for more information in the Sunday bulletins over the next couple of weeks and I look forward to growing in faith together in 2024.

In Christ,

Pastor Nick

# FPC Announcements

## JANUARY

### Birthdays

Mike Horn  
Paul Lute  
John Rutzen  
Joyce Noviskey  
Linda McGuire  
Benjamin Roets  
JoAnn Guernsey  
Gary Teegardin  
Dale Billingsley  
Ellarie Spindler  
Barb Arnold  
Candy Holsted  
Jan Reynolds  
Rose Hahn  
Jane Arnold  
Doug Hunt  
Roger Roets  
David Logan

## JANUARY

### Anniversaries

Brown, Rex and Lisa  
Bradley, Bill and Nancy  
Billingsley, Dale and Sandra



FPC invites you, your friends,  
and family to come and walk.  
Monday through Thursday,  
10am-3:30pm on our second  
floor.

**We request that you sign in &  
out in the church office.**

### New Prayer Guidelines

FPC is blessed to be a faithfully praying church in worship services, privately, and through a “prayer chain” which now includes the majority of the congregation and regular participants. Pastor Nick and the deacons have been in discussion to improve our prayer opportunities and communications and have approved the following guidelines.

Anyone is welcome to submit a prayer request via email or phone to the church administrative assistant and will specify whether the request is confidential or non-confidential.

- Confidential prayer requests will be written and submitted in the Purple Box at Connection Point for confidential praying by the pastor and a small prayer team.
- Non-confidential prayer requests **MUST HAVE THE PERMISSION OF THE PERSON BEING PRAYED FOR** and will be communicated to the church family (those listed in the directory) and staff via email immediately and in the Sunday bulletin (for 2 weeks) which is also available on Facebook.

Questions may be directed to the Deacons who oversee the Prayer requests.

# FPC Announcements

## Mission Committee Update

### Costa Rica

After a successful mission trip to Carpio in San Jose, Costa Rica, the Mission committee has continued to support this partnership. Recently, we have been blessed to help the following ministries through our International Mission Fund as well as private donations:

Alvin & Chio Navarrette and the church in La Carpio. We have donated \$6,000 to their expenses and purchased electric drums for the church.

\*Marielos and Las Gradass Ministry. An anonymous donor gave \$4,000 to the program this month, in addition to our annual donation of \$2,000.

\*CFCI offices. We have purchased new couches and furniture for the guest house. This was done with a donation of \$4,000, plus other financial gifts back in September during the pre-trip visit.

\*We have also purchased a new printer for the medical clinic and a water pump for the Renuevos Center.

\*Support for Camp. The Carols and Jazz concert raised over \$750, combined with private donors and a bit left over in the Mission budget to total over \$2,000 in camp support.

Marielos – “Hello Sir Ricardo! Greetings and blessings to you and your family!! What a great surprise and blessing! 🙏🌸 May the Lord bless the anonymous donor for thinking about Gradass! 😊🙏”

Alvin – “Wow Ricardo we are speechless. Chio started crying a lot because it has been a hard week, with everything that has happened and this is something that we can share with you who have been in ministry and understand what difficult as it can often be: this month has felt like a desert and this is a pool in the desert, a reminder of God's care and not because of the money, that is the least important thing, but because it feels like a warm hug.”





# Mission Committee

## Hand2Hand



hand2hand®

A huge THANK YOU to First Presbyterian! Our congregation has absolutely stepped up for the students of Southeastern! Beginning with our service and fundraising back in August, continuing through donations of food, and displayed with bi-weekly commitments of time for packing and delivering – the blessings have multiplied. We have never been on better financial footing, and our packing has so many hands and is so efficient – we spend more time drinking coffee and gabbing than we do working!! Over 80 kids receive bags EVERY week! For Christmas break – we packed a heavy-duty bag with enough food to topple over a kindergartener – and included a book as a gift from the Children of Barry Community fund. We can not say thank you enough!



# FPC Announcements

November 29, 2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

We send our most sincere thanks to Marge's church family for all your prayers, cards, and support over her later years. Serving the Lord through her First Presbyterian Church was so important to her when she was able. When she was no longer able, she was very appreciative of the visits, plants, CD's of services, phone calls, and cards. In her final years, your newsletters and bulletins kept her connected. •



We would also like to express our gratitude for all the love and grace shown to our family at the time of her funeral. Everyone was so very accommodating. Pastor Nick was a welcome calm in the storm for us. Just in case you didn't know it, Julia is a gem! Liz was so easy to work with and let us customize to our heart's content. Even your custodian went above and beyond. *And of course your facility is just a wonderful place to gather in such a time.*

May God richly bless you as you continue your good work in the name of Jesus Christ.

Peace,

Tony and Kay Barcroft

for the Family of Marjorie Barcroft

Scan Me



To Give Electronically

This QR code will take you to our electronic giving platform. Thank You for all your continued support for our ministries here at FPC!



COMING  
SOON

# FPC Announcements



## Signs and Wonders Men's Bible Study

Beginning Thursday, January 11, from 9 am to 10:30 in the adult meeting room, all men are invited to study the Signs and Wonders, a beginners guides to the miracles of Jesus. Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, who is an orthodox Jew with a PHD in New Testament studies, will explore selected miracles of Jesus in historical and theological context. For each miracle, AJ and our men's group will discuss not only how past witnesses would have understood the events, but also how we can draw meaning from Jesus's words and actions.

This is a six week study January 11 - February 29 (off 2/1 and 2/8)

Sessions include:

1. Take up your pallet and walk
2. Stilling the Storm
3. The Feeding of the 5,000 or more.
4. The Bleeding Woman and a Dead Girl
5. A two-stage miracle
6. The Raising of Lazarus

Please sign up and pickup your study guide at the Connection Point beginning December 31. The fee for the study guide is \$15.

If you have any questions, please call Dave Storms, 616-558-8611.

The Family Ministries Team invites everyone to a pancake breakfast immediately following service on January 14, 2024. Enjoy some fellowship with the rest of the congregation while supporting a great cause!

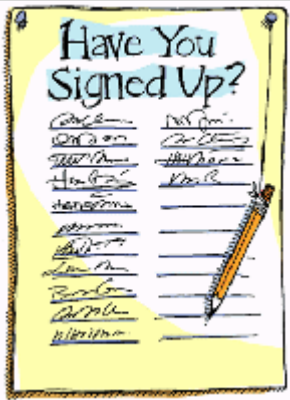
A free-will donation will be the cost of admission with the proceeds going to sponsor students who are attending Springhill winter retreat in February 2024!



**The Mission Committee and Deacons** thank you, our Church Family for your outpouring of love and generosity for our Love Tree project this year! Because of that love and generosity, we were able to deliver Christmas presents, Bibles, gas cards, grocery cards, and a holiday dinner to six families, five from our Southeastern School community and one from our own Noah's Ark Preschool. What a wonderful way to celebrate the birth of our Savior together! May you all be richly blessed in the new year!



## FPC Announcements



We hope that you have enjoyed being greeted by members of our congregation in 2023. We would love to see more people volunteer to help in 2024. Reach out to Joann Logan at (269) 275-0535 or at [joannflogan1@gmail.com](mailto:joannflogan1@gmail.com) if you would like to be added to the schedule.



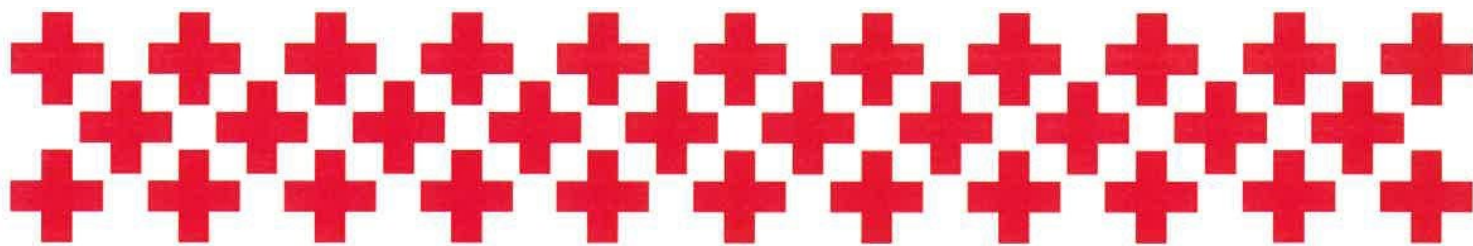
Thank You to the those who donated mittens and socks during the Christmas Eve Service. The items will be donated to area agencies to help those in need of warmth for their hands and feet.



**CHURCH COMMUNICATION** is being updated. You may see something come across your email that says you have been subscribed to MailChimp. This will allow congregation members who have email to receive the bulletin, newsletter, prayer requests, and other important congregational information. Please do not unsubscribe unless you do not want to receive this information. Contact Julia in office at (269) 945-5463 if you have any questions.







# Blood Drive

## First Presbyterian Church

Thursday, February 1, 2024  
12:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

For an appointment visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter sponsor code:  
Hastings Community, or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

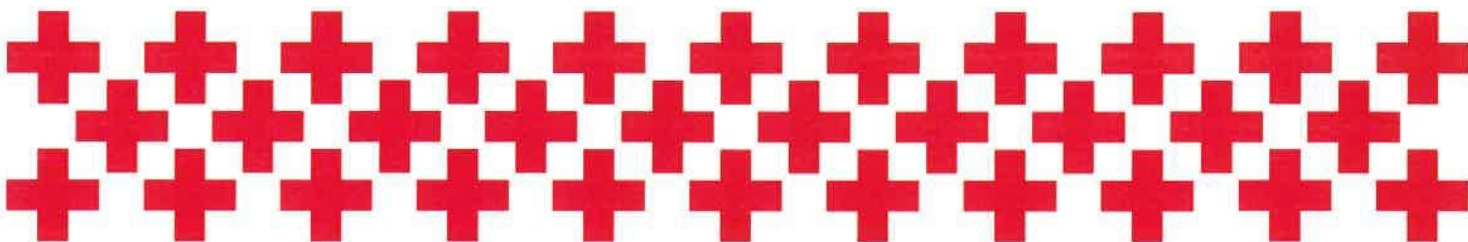


Scan to be directed to  
RapidPass



Scan to schedule an  
appointment

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by  
visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your  
Pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of  
your appointment.





**The Worship and Work of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, MI**

**Minutes of the December 18th 2023 Regular Session Meeting**

The meeting was held at the Church, 405 N-M37 Highway, Hastings MI in the Adult classroom.

In attendance were Elders Cindy Preston, Gary Kimble, Sunny Anderson, Dave Allarding, Tracy Solmes, Larry Winkler, Sandra Billingsly, Scott Allarding, Kim Bosma, Steve Laubaugh, and Moderator Rev. Nick Marlatt. Excused Sally Keller and Jim Bruce, and Absent: Elder Michael Behrendt

A quorum was established and Pastor Nick opened the meeting with prayer at 7:05 and a reading of Matthew 1 and a devotional Advent reading.

**The Consent Agenda** containing Minutes from the November Regular Session Meeting and tonight’s Agenda was approved.

**Clerk Report:** Correspondence was received from Bob Oster thanking us for the use of the sanctuary for the Christmas Concert, and a thank you was also received from United Way thanking us for the teenage gifts collected at the Miracle of Christmas Children’s program.

**Pastor’s Report** Nick will be out of the office tomorrow, officiating at his uncle’s funeral.

**Personnel Report** Larry commented about the Presbytery Worship service being nice, and he noted there is a 7% decrease in their numbers. Comments regarding Nick’s review were circulated. The updates to the Personnel Section of the Operations Manual, including the sexual misconduct policy were reviewed and approved. The NAPS Director Job description was also reviewed and approved. Staff evaluations will be happening again in March.

**Trustees – No meeting this month, the sheet metal is being fabricated for the outdoor fireplace, the stonework is progressing. He intends to have it finished by the new year.**

**Worship & Music** – Christmas is coming! We’re ready and waiting.

**Financial & Stewardship** - Gary Reported that the numbers are still trending well to get rid of the deficit in our budget (or close to it) by the end of the year. The Stewardship drive now has more units giving that we had projected! J It is still likely we will have a deficit budget again this year. Expenses for the budget are very realistic. Funding for the RTU repairs that trustees needed came out of the Capital Fund. Stewardship would like to meet with Trustees to put together a future repairs needed list. Our Walker, Fluke, & Sheldon contract was continued, they have done our payroll for 5 or 6 years now. Edward Jones CD’s were purchased with some pre-paid pledges at 5.1 Interest rate, a motion was made and approved to use that earned interest for the Session Reserve fund. There are a few other checking accounts (Foster Fund, and Youth Missions) we are looking at investing; those earnings would also go to the Session Reserve Fund. Nancy is investigating any other funds that could be invested.

**YOUR 2023 FPC**

**SESSION:**

**2023**

Mike Behrendt  
Tracy Solmes  
Steve Laubaugh  
Gary Kimble

**2024**

Jim Bruce  
Dave Allarding  
Scott Allarding  
Sally Keller

**2025**

Sunny Andersen  
Sandra Billingsley  
Kim Bosma  
Cindy Preston



A capital campaign was discussed as well as what we would like to do with any large gifts received.

**Family Ministry** The Pancake Breakfast will be held on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> with donations to support the Spring Hill trip, we will be attending the session held the 16, 17, & 18<sup>th</sup> of Feb. the Deacons and Family Ministry are looking at a “Protecting Young Eyes” community presentation around screen time & youth. The PYE Company is out of the Holland Area and they do both faith-based and secular presentations, we are looking to schedule this for next fall.

**Deacons/Mission** No action items the Love Tree tags were all taken and the gifts will be delivered tomorrow. Hand to Hand packing is also happening tomorrow. Some additional dollars were directed to Costa Rica missions that we support. (\$3,000 to Alvin’s Church and \$3,000 to the Steps Ministry)

**New Business:** The Statement of Identity that was put together by the LGBTQ+ task force was reviewed; some edits were suggested and will be incorporated, and it will come back next month for final approval. Some terms on the website will also be formatted to lead to hyperlinks of definitions.

Leadership training will happen for the new nominees in January. The meeting was adjourned with a prayer by Pastor Nick at 8:53.

**Next Session Meeting rescheduled for January 22nd at 7:00 pm**  
These minutes respectfully submitted by Cindy Preston, Clerk of Session



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## The MESSENGER

Watch us on Facebook Live



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2024

Newsletter