



Worship SCHEDULE

- 3/4 John 13:1-17 Rev. Dan Birchfield
Jesus Knew His Identity, Yet Served with Humility
Communion
- 3/11 Matthew 7:15-29 Rev. Dan Birchfield
Jesus Spoke God's Truth in Everyday Language
- 3/18 Matthew 4:23-5:12 Rev. Dan Birchfield
Jesus Cast a Vision of a Better Kingdom, Now and Future
- 3/25 Mark 11:1-19 Rev. Dan Birchfield
Jesus Courageously Completed His Assigned Mission
Palm Sunday
- 3/29 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Worship
- 3/30 All Day Good Friday Prayer Labyrinth Walk

Prayer REQUESTS

Becky Bell,
Debra
Vanderveen,
Luke Carpenter,
Avis Martin,
Brenda and Bill
Sidney, Sr.,
Pearl Stutz,
Carl and Mary
Belson

Church Office HOURS

New Schedule

M-W 8-5 pm
Th 8-4:30 pm

Closed F-Sun
and
Lunch 12-1 pm

Church OFFICERS

On February 4th, we extended a huge thank you to our retiring officers, and welcomed new officers to the boards.

Retiring Elders:

David Allarding
Deb Carpenter
Bernie Oom
Cindy Preston
John Rutzen

Retiring Deacons:

David Arnold
Laurie Ann Curtis
Marsh Evans
Marcia Leedy
Sue Oom

Retiring Trustee:

Jim Bruce

Newly elected Elders:

Sally Keller
Tom Mawson
Jo Ann Mullins
Marjorie Roets
Deborah Storms

Newly elected Deacons:

Sandra Billingsley
Cheryl Cole
Judy Fletcher
Marcia Leedy
John Surratt
Jeff Arnold (1 year term)

Newly elected Trustee:

Doug Hunt

Pastor's CORNER

I hope you are enjoying the daily devotions in your Celebrate Jesus Journal. These devotions are going to help you better appreciate why Jesus is so attractive to so many people. It's likely that our study of the Scriptures pinpointed in the journal will enhance our personal attraction to Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Keep at these daily devotions, and follow the prescribed action steps. You will be truly blessed.



Are you making it to Wednesday's Soup Suppers and Small Group Discussions? I hope so! They run through March 14. Come and share in the fellowship and encouragement that comes from talking about what we are learning through the Celebrate Jesus 50 Day Spiritual Adventure.

On Thursday March 29th at 7pm, we will be having a Maundy Thursday service. The term "Maundy" is a Latin term, that when translated to English is the word "mandate." So, it's Mandate Thursday on March 29th in the Church throughout the world. We remember the institution of the Lord's Supper that evening, recalling specifically Jesus' mandate in John 13:34 where he stated, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

The next day is Good Friday, March 30th, and we encourage people to come at their convenience and walk the prayer labyrinth behind the church facility, while prayerfully reflecting on the last 7 statements Jesus made while suffering on the cross. We will have prayer guides easily accessible in a weather proof container at the entrance to the labyrinth. The Labyrinth will be open from sunrise to sunset that day.

Easter Sunday, April 1st, will be a glorious worship experience at our 9am traditional and 10:30am contemporary service. We hope that you will invite folks you know who don't have a church home. It's a perfectly reasonable Sunday to invite non-church going people. They often aren't surprised to be asked, and they are likely to have a curiosity to attend.

I am praying that these spiritual practices, worship events, and evangelistic endeavors make this Lent particularly meaningful for you. Lent is a time for acknowledging our need of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins. Additional reflection on Jesus' sacrifice for us deepens our sense of being loved by God, deepens our love for God, and deepens our love for the world that shares our need for Jesus as their Savior and Lord. In the midst of such reflection it is only natural for someone to make it a season of repentance, adding spiritual disciplines, and making necessary adjustments in one's priorities. Enjoy the fullest value of Lent.

God Bless!
Pastor Dan

Session MINUTES

January 22, 2018 - Consent Agenda Approved Session Minutes of 12/18/17
Declaration of Intent sent to Presbytery of Lake Michigan on 1/12/18
Note Deacon Minutes of 1/16/18 were reviewed
Instruct Clerk to submit the Annual Statistical Report to the GA by 2/9/18
Note a \$1000 donation from FPC Pickleball Group was received on 1/22/18.

Deacons –The Love Tree gifted 9 families (37 family members) with presents, food, Bibles, and blankets. To date, \$807 has been donated to the Deacon Fund from the congregation through the Christmas pledge envelopes.

General Fund– The current financial report was received on motion. End-of-year giving brought additional funds to the 2017 receipts.

Trustees Report – Session approved the recommendation that no changes to the facility use fees will be made in 2018. It was also noted that insurance on our buildings was reviewed and deemed adequate.

Personnel Pastor Birchfield's Terms of Call were presented. Pastor's willingness to receive a cut in pay was duly noted, with the hope that his full salary can be restored in the future.

Church Administrator – End-of year pledges made it necessary to adopt the re-stated 2018 Budget. Motion passed. On motion, Session voted to keep \$17,349 in the fund balance to cover projected deficit, and the remaining \$19,961 be transferred into the Capital Fund. Motion carried.

Worship and Music – The following dates for a united 10 A.M. service were approved on motion:
February 4, May 27, June 10 through September 2, December 16 and December 30, 2018.

Mission Committee – A washer & dryer were purchased and donated to the Family Promise.

Other – Revisions to our Bylaws were presented. The motion was made and supported to accept the revised Bylaws and present them to the congregation at the annual meeting. Motion passed.

The outgoing Elders were thanked for their three years of dedication and service. Each was asked to speak to their time on Session and share any charge they might wish to pass on.

January 28, 2018 1:30 PM – Special Meeting to receive new members Mike Gilbert, Gerry, Carole, and Logan Smith, Robert and Linda Vanderboegh , and Heidi and James Strimback -their three children Noah, Isabella and Molly will also be baptized following instruction by Pastor Birchfield.

February 4, 2018 - Pastor Daniel Birchfield opened the meeting with prayer. The Organizational Reports were presented for review.

Moderator of Personnel presented the proposed Terms of Call for Pastor Birchfield, while Pastor and several other staff members stepped out of the meeting. It was noted that Pastor Birchfield had been consulted and approved his salary package, which included a 10% reduction due to budget constraints. A motion was made to roll back Pastor Birchfield's salary by 5%, rather than the proposed 10%. The motion was supported and approved.

A motion to review and revise the By-laws as presented was made, supported and approved.

(continued)

(Session Minutes, Continued)

On motion, Jeff Arnold was nominated and elected to serve a one-year term as Deacon. Elected board members were ordained and installed during worship earlier on this date.

Four at-large members were needed to serve on the 2018 Nominating Committee. The following were nominated and agreed to serve: Sandra Drummond, Megan Roets, Dale Billingsley and Cindy Preston. The motion was made and carried to close nominations and a unanimous ballot be cast for those nominated.

Under new business, a request to hold one united worship service instead of two separate services was presented. Discussion followed, and people shared their views and preferred music. One member stated the goal should be to work together to serve Jesus and bring people to Christ opposed to focusing on our own personal preference of worship style. Another stated, "It's not about us. We need to reach others and bring more people to know Jesus Christ." Another suggested, "If we are to be a church for All Ages, we need to offer two services to reach everyone." No action was taken.

On motion, the Meeting of the Congregation was closed and The Annual Meeting of the Corporation was opened at 12:45. President of Trustees reviewed the reports of the corporation.

The possibility of selling the manse in the future was discussed. The house was built in 1945 and is in need of updates. No action at this time.

Jim Day, Church Administrator, gave an overview of the 2018 operating budget. Session approved a deficit budget, and will attempt to balance it by year end.

Stewardship UPDATE

The following provides a monthly budget update:

Month-end January 31, 2018, budget snapshot:

Receipts

Budgeted Receipts: \$69,395*

Actual Receipts: \$72,395*

Expenses

Budgeted Expenses: \$43,768

Actual Expenses: \$61,811**

*includes one month (1/12) of prepaid pledges

**includes three payroll cycles in the month of January; normally two

Thank you so much for your support!! Please continue to pray as we journey together to reach our community for Christ!!

David Curtis, Stewardship Chair, and Committee Members:

Dave Arnold, Ned Brown, David Logan, Larry Winkler

Family MINISTRIES

The 50 Day Spiritual Adventure, Celebrate Jesus! Update

It's not too late to join our Lenten Adventure crew here at FPC! Celebrate Jesus focuses on eight qualities of Christ that drew others to him. Each week, Pastor Dan is preaching on one of those qualities. We, as a congregation, have the opportunity to explore qualities even further every day of the following week as we open our journals, and complete daily scripture assignments. Four Wednesday evenings, our Adventure study goes even deeper as we meet for "Soup and Group," Feb. 21, 28, March 7 and 14. Soup's served at 6, conversation starts at 6:30.

Even if you aren't going on the Adventure, no worries! Each "Soup and Group" session will be enjoyed by adventurers and non-adventurers alike! If you are more of an action person, then you'll love the 5 action steps that are part of the Adventure experience. Implementing action steps develops healthy spiritual habits, not just for the season of Lent, but for the rest of your life!

Soup and Group Provider Reminders:

- February 21: Deacons providing soup
- February 28: Student Ministries providing soup
- March 7: Noah's Ark team providing soup
- March 14: Music and Worship providing soup

Love babies? You're needed during second worship service

Alisa Willard, our nursery coordinator, needs additional hands during the second worship service to assist with our growing nursery population. We've already got the 4th Sunday of the month covered. Could you, would you, sign up to be in the nursery for the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Sunday of the month? Talk to Jan DeVos or Alisa Willard if you have questions or are ready to sign up. We'll take it from there! Our families with very young children thank you!

Heads up for a June event you'll never forget!

Join us for Summer Solstice: June 19, 20, and 21, three evenings of family fun!

We're thinking outside the Vacation Bible School box this time around! Plans are in the works for three June evenings, beginning with supper at 5:30, ending by 7:30, with tons of fun in between! There will be food, there will be music, there will be drama! Bring your children, your grandchildren, your neighbors, your spouse, your Aunt Ethel who's looking for something fun to do! And what does "Summer Solstice" have to do with anything? Well, June 21st is the one day of the year when the hours of daylight and the hours of darkness are equal. Plus, June 21st is the first day of summer! This is going to be amazing! Put it on your calendar NOW!

Noah's Ark PRESCHOOL

What a wonderful February we have had! The Valentine Programs were amazing. The children really sang their hearts out, celebrated their love for Jesus, family and friends. The teaching staff put so much time, effort, and planning into this event, and it really showed! A very special thank you goes out to Cindy Preston and Karen VanDenBerge in the sound booth, Todd Willard for stage set up, and Hilby Medendorp and Bob Hartig for setting up the sanctuary to hold our large crowd. Hosting these big events is definitely a team effort!

We are holding a Canvas and Cocoa event on March 10. Mrs. Bivens, our resident artist, will be leading an art lesson for both adults and children to paint a winter scene. The cost is \$12 per person. This includes a canvas panel, cookies, and cocoa. Everyone is invited!

Plans are also in full swing for our March 15th reading night. This year we will be doing a Pete the Cat theme. Mrs. Bivens has been working hard creating wonderful activities for the children to participate in that night.

Our preschool is due for our Star Rating Review, which occurs every two years. The Star Rating Program is a state wide initiative that assesses the quality of preschools across Michigan. We are ready, and looking forward to getting our renewal!

During late January and throughout February, there has been widespread illness in our county. The staff at NAPS have been continually sanitizing toys and equipment, and encouraging frequent handwashing to promote wellness for our preschoolers. We also sent home information about Influenza and Norovirus to help educate families about when to keep children home from school.

The children have been enjoying the snow during February, but I think we are all looking forward to spring! We take the children outside at all times of the year to explore the changes in nature.

We have a few speakers coming for our Wednesday playgroup times. Amy Cherry will be with us to discuss Brain Gym, and our own Mrs. Pena's husband, Luis Pena will be here to tell parents about Brain Balance.

Enrollment is already in full swing for the 2018-2019 school year. Please spread the word throughout our community that we are registering for next year! Thanks for the help!

DATES & BITS:

- *Enrollment Stands at 87 children! What blessings God has sent to us!
- *March 6 Ministry Meeting
- *March 10 Cocoa and Canvas
- *March 15 Reading Night
- *March 20/21 Chapel Time
- *March 26 Begins our 2 week Spring Break – Parent/Teacher Conferences continue

Student MINISTRY

This month I wanted to shed some light on a ministry that many in our church are passionate about. One of the ministries that FPC is involved with in our community is Young Life. Young Life is a national organization that got its start in the 1930s. Since then, Young Life has expanded all over the world. Young Life is a group of caring adults who go where kids are, win the right to be heard, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. The main mission of Young Life is introducing adolescents to Jesus Christ, and helping them grow in their faith. In the surrounding communities of FPC there are two Young Life groups, Middleville and Hastings.

With both groups, the focus is the same. Building relationships with students, and bringing them the Gospel. Young Life sees three things as priorities:

- Students around the world are searching for purpose, meaning, and life.
- We get in it with students, and accept them as they are – no strings attached.
- Students are invited to experience life as God designed it to be lived.

There are many in our faith community who are involved in the two Young Life groups. We have leaders, parents, committee members, and many others that are passionate about what Young Life is doing in our community right here at FPC. If you would like more information about Young Life (<https://www.younglife.org>), Hastings Young Life (<https://hastingsmi.younglife.org>), or Middleville Young Life (<https://middleville.younglife.org>) click on the links provided.



Staff CONTACTS

405 N. M-37 Highway
Hastings MI 49058

P: 269-945-5463

F: 269-945-4078

www.firstchurchhastings.org

Dan Birchfield x 3003

Pastor

dbirchfield@firstchurchhastings.org

Jim Spindler

Congregational Care

[jrspin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrs핀@sbcglobal.net)

Jim Day x 3023

Church Administrator

jday@firstchurchhastings.org

Nancy Allering x 3004

Financial Manager

nallerding@firstchurchhastings.org

Hilby Medendorp x 3024

Facility Manager

hmedendorp@firstchurchhastings.org

Karen Koedam x 3001

Administrative Assistant

kkoedam@firstchurchhastings.org



[Follow us on Facebook](#)

First Presbyterian MINISTRIES



FAMILY MINISTRY

Jan De Vos x 3005

jdevos@firstchurchhastings.org

Jan is our Family Ministry Director, and plans education and events within the church for nursery-grade school children, and adults.



NOAH'S ARK PRESCHOOL

LeeAnn Miller-Busson x 3008

noahsark@firstchurchhastings.org

LeeAnn is our Noah's Ark Preschool Director. The preschool is celebrating its 21st year serving the Hastings Community this school year!



STUDENT MINISTRY

Patrick Tyrrell x 3010

ptyrrell@firstchurchhastings.org

Pat leads the students, Middle High through College. The kids are very active in Sunday School and Youth Group, and get involved in Mission and Fellowship events.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY

Todd Willard and Matt Callaghan x 3006

twillard@hassk12.org

mcallaghan@firstchurchhastings.org

Todd leads the First Presbyterian Praise Team, a contemporary group of musicians and vocalists.



Matt leads the Church Choir in traditional hymns and music during the program year.

All the Ministries of First Presbyterian welcome and rely on the congregation throughout the year. To get more involved, please talk to the Ministry Directors about how you can help.

Click the month for the church calendar



Special Birthdays:

Alice Jones will be 95 on March 1st. Please wish her a happy birthday if you see her!