Worship Schedule

10:00 am


May 3 Ephesians 3:14-21
You Are Loved Beyond Comprehension
Rev. Dan Birchfield

May 10 Ephesians 4:1-16
You Are Christ’s Body
Rev. Dan Birchfield

May 17 Ephesians 5:1-20
You Are to be Imitators of God
Rev. Dan Birchfield

May 24 Graduation Sunday
Eric A. Boyd, Jr.

May 31 Ephesians 6:10-18
You are a Well Armored Warrior of God
Rev. Dan Birchfield

The Office is Closed...
but feel free to leave a message and Laura will return your call.
Monday thru Thursday
(269) 945 - 5463
Contact Laura @ x3001
lscott@firstchurchhastings.org
Evangelism in Pandemic Proportions!

We are all feeling like veterans of this stay at home period of life. Days are moving ever so slowly as we strive to keep feeling like we are living while under restriction. It’s had its very hard moments for all of us. Yet, when we have our moments of mature contemplation of why we are abiding by the Governor’s orders we know its for a cause of greater value than our own personal freedoms. We are protecting people’s lives. Our actions are life-preserving for ourselves and numerous others in our community.

I am reminded of something the Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 9:22-23, “When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.”

We are aware of the reality that Covid-19 is more dangerous to some than others. By staying at home and accepting the restrictions those whose mortality is more vulnerable are kept safer from being infected. And those of us who can be virus spreaders are also keeping those more vulnerable safer by our staying at home. Together we are sharing in each other’s vulnerability to preserve the lives of the vulnerable by staying at home.

What we are doing also can have a significant spiritual upside as well. Keeping people healthy, including ourselves, increases the possibility of the future density spread of the gospel in our community. Our staying home right now and following physical distancing guidelines in the future better ensures the longevity of our role of being evangelists and having more people to whom we can spread the Good news.

Often in life experiences we face we can draw spiritual metaphors. I see a spiritual metaphor in the experience of this Pandemic virus. Seeing it spread through over 180 countries worldwide over the last 5 to 6 months is a metaphor for us on how we should pray for the Good News to spread across our planet. I love the last sentence in the verses I shared from Paul, “I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.”

When the pandemic is contained. After a vaccination has been developed and shared world-wide. It will be time for the Church to do everything it can to spread the Good News and share in its blessing across the world. What does it look like when the Church becomes viral in its spread? What would constitute the world announcing that we are in a Pandemic era of evangelism?

We are at home sharing in the physical weakness of others so that when this Pandemic of Covid-19 is eradicated we can return vigilantly to doing everything we can to spiritually save some. It’s a time for us to pray for God to prepare us as a Church to spread the Good News—sharing Jesus with our community and the world.

God Bless!
Pastor Dan
Music Ministry Updates

Live Streaming our Services and Troubleshooting

We are so thankful for the efforts of our Ministry Team. They have been working diligently to provide Sunday sermons, worship, devotionals and much more through a wide variety of online platforms. This is a new era for our church as we are needed to learn rapidly how to use technology to reach each and everyone of our Presbyterian Family, but also new ways to reach out to the world around us.

What a great problem this is though! On our Facebook group for First Pres., we are being shown some great statistics - Since the beginning of the shutdown to now...we have...

- had 49 new people join and follow our Facebook group.
- 1,145 page views (this is up 252%)
- Reached and engaged over 3,792 people through posts that we’ve made (up 257%)
- Had 140 people check out our page for the first time (up 324%)

Had 4,172 people view our videos for at least 30 secs or more (up 366%)

This means we are reaching out to hundreds more people daily than we do in one Sunday in our own church. This is truly a blessing indeed! People are looking for answers during this crisis and we - God’s people are finding a way to do so, even with social distancing. GOD IS GOOD!

We understand that there have been some frustrations on occasion with our streaming services via Facebook Live. Upon some further research, a list has been developed of troubleshooting measures to help you prepare to receive live streaming in a more efficient way.

The first thing to understand is that technology is not infallible. In this Covid-19 pandemic, people are turning to technology more and more and the internet is getting overwhelmed with new people accessing it everyday.

Also, the way we stream and it’s quality is dependent on so many factors, including…

- Wi-Fi strength at home or office
- Location of internet (country or in the city)
- Age of the device
- Cell phone signal

And so much more!
I would love to give you a few ideas to troubleshoot at home to help make your viewing experience easier to access, and provide you tools to better serve you when joining us on a Sunday for our live service feed.

1. Wi-Fi Connections
   o Everyone’s access to internet is different and if you are struggling to connect to Facebook for live streaming - can’t find us in time, lagging, sudden stops in playback, or poor picture quality, it could be caused by too many people on your internet.
   o Each internet service allows a certain amount of date to come into your devices, and if too many devices are connected to the internet at once, this would cause you to not have enough “data power” to watch live from a streaming service.
   o To troubleshoot this problem - first, check the amount of devices you have connected to the internet. Turn off your Wi-Fi connection on those devices through settings, and only allow the device or computer you are going to stream from access your internet.

2. Facebook Connectivity
   o If you are having trouble seeing when we stream live on Facebook, or have trouble finding a segment in time. Check to make sure you are fully connected to our page.
   o Go to the First Church Facebook Page from your Facebook.
   o Check to make sure that you have clicked the “like” (which is a thumbs up image) and the “follow” button. When these boxes are checked, a notification will be sent to you when we go live. You can click on that notification to get to us quickly.
   o Look back later
   o If these two options aren’t working, you can always search our page the hour after service. After we record live, Facebook posts our videos in order on the newsfeed. Here you can access all of our content at your own leisure, and can pause and rewind as needed.
   o You can also check out our links that we send for “truth casting”. We stream our final product here hours after service.
   o Most importantly, give grace often :)  
   o I’ve spent the last few days speaking to many friends across the U.S. who are working for churches trying to find the best way to approach outreach to God’s people.
   o Through this, I have discovered that everyone is doing it differently. There is no right or wrong way to approach through technology, and in this day in age, there is so much to learn.
   Some churches have been live streaming for years - becoming masters of live creation, while others - like ours - are just starting to understand what this new frontier looks like. Some churches are streaming services just like we are, while others are creating streams that are on one video stream, with seamless transitions.

Please rest assured in knowing that myself and the ministry team have been also researching new ways to make our live streaming cleaner and more accessible to our people. We are going to try to bring some of these ideas in the coming Sundays as we continue to build our brand and presence of First Pres. to the internet and world!

This is a beautiful problem that we are experiencing that people want to find a way to worship together even without the physical building of church. God is truly moving in this time!

Submitted with the grace and love of our Lord!

Matthew Callaghan
Director of Chancel Choir
First Presbyterian Church of Hastings
Host Week

Our next host week is currently scheduled for June 28 to July 5. But how would that work, you ask, if our movements are still restricted? Here’s how…

The guest families are staying at Hope United Methodist Church are not rotating churches as before. During the day the families are upstairs in the Day Center, and at night, the families are hosted on the main floor of Hope UMC. Each family has a separate room and bathroom, and a separate dining table. Daily sanitizing procedures are in place. The host church’s volunteers come to Hope UMC during their host week and bring meals as scheduled. Family Promise is actively protecting the volunteers as well. They have a separate area to sit when hosting, separate bathrooms, and the sleeping room for overnight volunteers is also private.

Yes, Family Promise is still here for the families.
Yes, FPC still needs you as volunteers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Our 1-year Family Promise Statistics (4/14/19 to 3/22/20)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• First Presbyterian Church was the very first church in Barry County to host Family Promise families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• # of Host Weeks -- <strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• # of Total Volunteer Hours @ church -- <strong>1250</strong> (does not include hrs. given by volunteers at their home preparing meals, doing laundry, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avg. # of Volunteers / Host Week -- <strong>40</strong> (ranged from 37 to 45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• # of Unique Families Served -- <strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• # of Families obtained Permanent Housing -- <strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Typical # of Families / Host Week -- <strong>2 to 3</strong> (max. allowed is 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avg. # of Guests / Host Week -- <strong>9</strong> (max. allowed is 14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hello to all my church peeps!!

I hope you all are staying safe and healthy in these troubling times. A set of verses that has really spoke volumes to me during this time is Psalm 91, please take some time and read this really encouraging set of verses.

The PATH youth ministry has not allowed COVID-19 to extinguish the flame God has lit. We have had facetime youth group, group chats and videos and verses being shared amongst us for encouragement. Please continue to pray for us during this trying time as we are trying to do ministry from a whole new way. This virus will not stop us from keeping connection and most importantly it will not stop us from sharing God’s word.

We are still moving forward with making future plans for PATH and that means we have our eye on summer camp!! July 26 – 30 we are planning on going to Never The Same Camp in South Carolina. The cost per-student is $350.00 and that covers everything. We are planning on scheduling some fundraising events at some point and when I have that information I will get it out to all of you. Two ways you can help since it’s going to be tough to raise funds right now with the lockdown is one, you can sponsor the camp fund and help us to save money so we can help students go to camp. Then number two, and what I think is the easiest way, is please save your pop cans for students to collect and return them after this lockdown is done.

We have also been busy getting the First Presbyterian Church Scholarship out this month. Very excited to give some seniors a much deserved reward towards their future education.

Thank you all so much for your prayers and support.

If you have any questions or need to just talk to me here is my cell number and email 231-268-8157, eboyd@firstchurchhastings.org

Hey everybody, Children’s Ministry is still plugging along with weekly contact with parents, about Bible crafts and activities along with a small teaching to go with each of these. Also Vacation Bible School is still on dates set for August 3-5, I will send out an email to those that have volunteered in the past. If you are not sure you are on that list and want to volunteer please shoot me an email. Stay safe and trust in the Lord!

The 2020 Youth Mission Trip

The 2020 Youth Mission trip is currently planned to happen and will be leaving FPC on Sunday 7/5 and returning on Saturday 7/11. Trip leadership will be closely following the pandemic situation & related restrictions that could affect the event. Any changes to the plans will be communicated through the church newsletter and emails.
Oh what a Change...
What a change from last month. Church authorized essential workers only enter the building. I have connection to the church from home. I monitor the cameras for security, send emails, do billings and watch the HVAC and boilers from home...lots going on. The building currently is shut down and using only what is needed for heat, etc. The staff is using a app called Zoom and we are able to see each other and communicate our concerns and needs.

God is still in charge and we will be back to using our facilities very soon.

Hilby

Hello Church Family,

It is that time of year when we need your help. The church has been instructed to be cautious and wise in our expenditures. So we need your help. We are looking for volunteers that are capable, reliable and willing to serve the church this summer in mowing the church yard.

If you think that you qualify to help meet this need would you please call or email Hilby, hmedendorp@firstchurchhastings.org, (269) 838-4012 or Bob at bhudberg@firstchurchhastings.org and they will get back with you as quickly as possible.

Thank you ahead of time for serving in this capacity.

The Trustees of First Presbyterian.

JOIN THE Lawn Crew!
Help us to Connect

The Deacons are striving to make sure our shut ins and those who might not utilize email or Facebook know what is happening at FPC Hastings, as a result of the pandemic. If you think someone that falls into the above criteria doesn't seem to have received contact from a Deacon, feel free to contact Dave Storms at 616-558-8611 Moderator of Deacons to let him know.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Would you like to be part of the Women's Book Study? We meet via Zoom on designated Thursday nights at 6:45p.m. This Thursday (4/23), we are discussing the first six chapters of the book by Bob Goff, "Everybody Always"; we plan to have at least three more gatherings. You can join us anytime - we will work through the book six chapters at a time. It is a very motivational book! Please contact Nancy Allerding (269 908-1018) or Susan Replogle (269 908-3896) if you are interested. It's not too late!
Care Group

Several years ago three church members discovered the benefit of supporting each other as they found themselves providing care for a loved one. The group expanded and has met regularly. It has evolved in supporting not only care providers but also those who are grieving a loss. Now that we are social distancing, we are enjoying the same support through zooming together on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. In the midst of challenges, God continues to hold us close - often through each other. Anyone from our church family who is interested in being a part of this group may contact Pat Cassell at 616-648-6498 or pat.cassell@gmail.com.

Southeastern Star Volunteers

Members of the Church Mission Committee: Dave Storms, John Surratt, Jan & Don Rounds, and Joann Logan – stand with Kim Domke, Title I Instruction Assistant at Southeastern Elementary – ready to give support at the X-STREAM Night Program. This photo was published in “The Saxon Sentinel” 2020 Winter Edition. Our church, coordinated by the Mission Committee supports SE Elementary activities: Back Pack Lunches – Tuesday/Friday; Second Sunday Sweep; “X-STREAM” Nights, The Christmas Closet’ The Food Pantry (during school breaks) and Student tutoring – at both SE and Star (Rosa’s Circle). The Mission Committee invites anyone to come join us in spreading “The Love of Jesus” into our community.

Joann Logan
Mission Committee Secretary
News from San Jose, Costa Rica

News from our hosts in Costa Rica: Susan, the head nurse at the Christ for the City Clinic in the slums, Carpio, told Rick and I that they are dealing with the covid-19 virus much like we are. The number of cases in Costa Rica is in the hundreds. It is not wide spread in the slums yet. The clinic is struggling to stay open, because no one can afford to pay the $5 clinic fee. Rick had the mission committee agree to sending a donation of $3,000 to CFC to keep the clinic open. That was wire transferred on April 20th. The funds came from our 2019 budget we had left over from our trip last November.

Pastor Gale Kragt and Spiritual Care Consultants received a $10,000 grant for meals and sleeping mats. These funds were a very timely and wonderful blessing for those that live in Carpio particularly during the COVID epidemic.

Although our church will not be able to take a team to Costa Rica in 2020, God continues to provide for those in need in Carpio. We need to pray for Grettel, Susan, Alvin, Sarita, Marielos, Fabiola, those that live in Carpio and all of those who are working on the front lines during these unsettling times. Pray also for Pastor Eduardo, his family and church during the epidemic.

God Bless...Dr. Jim
Use the code to find out what these biblical people may have taken on a picnic.

(A) [Genesis 3:6]  Adam and Eve  
   6  18  21  9  20

(B) [Genesis 25:28]  Isaac  
   23  9  12  4  7  1  13  5

(C) [Genesis 25:34]  Esau  
   19  20  5  23

(D) [Numbers 11:5]  Israelites in Egypt  
   3  21  3  21  13  2  5  18  19

(E) [Ruth 2:1-4]  Ruth  
   7  18  1  9  14

(F) [1 Samuel 14:2]  Saul  
   16  15  13  5  7  18  1  14  1  20  5  19

(G) [1 Samuel 14:29]  Jonathan  
   8  15  14  5  25

(H) [Daniel 1:12-16]  Daniel and friends  
   22  5  7  5  20  1  2  12  5  19

(I) [Matthew 3:4]  John the Baptist  
   12  15  3  21  19  20  19

(J) [Matthew 14:17]  The 5,000 people  
   2  18  5  1  4  &  6  9  19  8

Answer: fruit, wild game, stew, cucumbers, grain, pomegranates, honey, vegetables, locusts, bread & fish.
Wherever we go
No matter where we journey, God always protects us.

Directions: Use the map and compass to answer the clues. Then write the boxed letters in order in the spaces below to complete Psalm 121:8, NIV.

**Start at the SHIP.**
Move 1 space N, 3 spaces E, and 2 spaces N

Start at the WORLD.
Move 1 space W, 1 space S, and 1 space SE

Start at the SUITCASE.
Move 1 space NE, 2 spaces S, and 1 space E

Start at the PLANE.
Move 2 spaces SW, 1 space S, and 1 space W

Start at the CAR.
Move 1 space E, 1 space N, and 1 space NW

Start at the SIGN.
Move 1 space SE, 1 space W, and 2 spaces NW

The _ ORD will watch ove_ your comi_g and go_ng both no_ and for_vermore. Psalm 121:8, NIV
Blurb from Bob

The date is April 21, 2020. The place is my home office. The circumstances, the “Stay home, stay free” requirement has been in effect since March 24, 2020. So, let me tell you that this has placed a strained on all us in some way or another. We have missed seeing the people that have been used to seeing whether at church on Sunday morning or at other times during the week. We have found that we need to use other means to stay in contact with the ones that we care about.

In saying that, I hope you all have been able to either give or receive contact from family and friends. We had a family “Zoom” meeting on Easter Sunday night and it was good to have the whole family together at least on one computer screen. The laughing, the picking on one another and the seeing the smiles and reactions of the kids, grandkids and even great grandkids was priceless.

We are all paying a price in some way or another right now. Let me say to all of you, if you need to something in whatever capacity please call the church or someone you know who can help. Please don’t try going through this all alone. We are the church. We are a family. We need each other for “such a time as this”.

I am convinced that I don’t want to be the same person I was before this all started. I want to have growth in my intimacy with God. I want to be closer to Him, His ways and His will hearing His voice in all areas of my life. A verse God gave me recently is Psalm 63:8 look at what it says

“With passion I pursue and cling to you. Because I feel your grip on my life, I keep my soul close to your heart.”

God Bless family!
Bob Hudberg

A NOTE FROM NANCY

Hello Church Family! I miss you! I didn’t realize how the church facility is really just a building without all of us coming & going; with worship, study and the various ways in which we all participate in being the hands and feet of Jesus; until I sit here working on Mondays in a very empty building. I’ve thought a few times about as a kid how we would put our hands together and with our pointer fingers pointing up and recite “this is the church, this is the steeple open your hands and see all the people”, except now we see no people.

So, Laura asked staff if we could give a little update to you our church family, as to what we’ve been up to during the shutdown so here is just a peek (I can’t even remember how long now 😌). I’ve been working on Mondays to process as many essential financial activities as I can, paying bills, making deposits, running payroll etc. Can I say now, thank you for sending your church contributions by mail, electronic transfer & through our website! It has been so encouraging to be greeted by your mail, notes of encouragement, what a blessing you all are!

Outside of working in the office, I’ve been on the same journey as all of you. I find myself rocking between faith & fear and thanks be to God, I end right side up (more often) with FAITH! I am only able to do this as I attempt to keep a daily connection with a daily bible reading, a song that reaches me where & when I need it, our wonderful worship experiences on line along with, Zoom devotions, bible studies, oh my how I have been blessed! Just the other day I heard a pod cast with Max Lucado (prior to this would I have even taken the time for a pod cast?) and he said something that I so appreciate, “God meets our daily needs daily, not for a week a month or a year. Ask him for enough “Manna” (hope, strength, faith) for today, and then ask again tomorrow. One day at a time”. So, that’s what I’m trying to do, day by day one faithful step (with probably a crabby moment thrown in) until all this social distancing is over.

However you all may be experiencing this journey, (and I hope we have a Sunday morning full of our testimonies, some day soon 🙏) may Peace be with all of us today and tomorrow!

Love to you church family,

Nancy
Our Bible Verse for May

“A friend loves at all times”

Proverbs 17:17

Virtual Preschool

Our first ever Noah’s Ark Virtual Preschool launched during the months of March and April. NAPS teachers are currently implementing a new way of interacting with students from a social distance. Teachers are continuing contact with families through email, phone calls, Facebook and even Zoom classes for the young 5’s. Students are also receiving mailed packets that include the usual end of the year theme based activities that can be done at home as well as books, art projects, class photos, seeds for planting and bible verses, favorite songs and fingerplays. Our goal is to continue to provide for spiritual, cognitive, emotional and physical growth for our students even though we cannot be together in the classroom.

Our prayer for May
God bless the beautiful flowers.
God bless the birds that sing.
God bless the food we eat, and all that springtime brings.

Amen

REGISTRATION FOR 2020-2021

Registration for the next school year is ongoing! We have already registered 60 students and currently have spots in young 4’s, afternoon 3’s and afternoon 4’s, and would love for you to spread the word! Invite families to follow us on Facebook, email or call! 😊

For more information on classes, schedules and costs, contact NAPS at 269-945-5463 ext. 3008, or email noahsark@firstchurchhastings.org

THANK YOU for all of your support!!

*Children must be at least 2 years 9 months and toilet-trained to register.

We have had some great donations this year for our outdoor classroom and welcome any continued contributions, such as metal pots and pans, wooden bowls, spoons, spatulas, etc. Wagons, child-sized wheelbarrows, spools, and other natural “loose-parts” are always needed. We try to stay away from plastics, as they tend to break and don’t last long outdoors. We are planning to have another dirt pile dumped soon as well.
I am so thankful for the many opportunities to stay connected with my church family. The music. The worship messages. The prayer meetings. The daily devotionals. The posts on Facebook and email. The meetings that keep our 'church' moving forward and outward. The faces of family. The words of care, positivity and uplift. Each is a gift and a testament to our family's love of God. Thank you to everyone who is making all of this happen!

Have a great day!! 🌈 Susan

Staff and Ministry Teams have been adapting to the stay at home order by meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing. Daily Devotionals, Bible Study, Session meetings...you name it, we've Zoomed it! Check your emails and Facebook for opportunities to stay connected with your church family.
It's no exaggeration that millions of people have bitten into the sweet sensation that is a Disney cinnamon churro, available at all Disney parks worldwide. Though all these themed locations are temporarily closed due to Covid-19, at least families who had planned trips can recreate the magic of Disney's beloved churros at home. The recipe was released on April 5 on the Disney Parks Blog.

**Disney's Churro Bites**

**Ingredients (serves four):**

- 1 cup water
- 8 tablespoons butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon, divided
- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 ½ cups vegetable or canola oil
- ½ cup sugar
- Favorite dipping sauce

**Instructions:**

1. Combine water, butter, salt, ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon in a 1 ½-quart saucepan over medium heat. Bring pot to a boil, and then reduce heat to low.
2. Add flour to the pot and stir until mix forms into a ball. Remove the pot from heat and let rest for 5-7 minutes.
3. Add eggs to the pot and stir until combined; set aside.
4. Heat oil in a medium skillet or 1-quart saucepan over medium-high heat (or until temperature reaches 350 F).
5. Spoon dough into a piping bag with a star tip. Pipe 1-inch strip of dough over the saucepan, cut and drop into hot oil. Repeat until the churro bites fill the saucepan with additional room to fry.
6. Fry the churro bites until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon or mesh spider strainer, and drain the churro bites on a paper towel.
7. Mix sugar and remaining ground cinnamon in a medium-sized bowl. Toss in the churro bites until coated.
8. Serve with your favorite dipping sauce.

**Disney's Dole Whip Pineapple Frozen Treat**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 generous scoop of vanilla ice cream
- 4 ounces of pineapple juice
- 2 cups of frozen pineapple

**Instructions:**

1. Add ice cream, pineapple juice and frozen pineapple to a blender at low speed, and then increase to high speed. Blend until smooth.
2. Use a piping bag with a star tip to recreate the classic Dole Whip swirl—or use a regular ice cream scooper—and add soft-serve to bowl.
First Presbyterian Church of Hastings
405 N. M-37 Highway
Hastings, MI 49058
www.firstchurchhastings.org

The MESSENGER

Visit with us at
www.firstchurchhastings.org

Missed a Sunday? No problem!
You can watch on Truthcasting.

MAY

LIKE & SHARE ON
facebook