

The Session and members of First Presbyterian Church Fargo extend a sincere welcome to you. We are grateful for your presence today! We welcome all persons regardless of race, nationality, disability, gender or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services and to serve as an officer of the church.

Everyone is invited for coffee and fellowship in the Gathering Space after worship. We recycle! If you are not taking your bulletin, please drop it in the blue bin at the door as you leave.

✧ Please rise in body or spirit.

December 28, 2025
First Sunday of Christmas
We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

Carol of the Bells arr. Bonam/Dilley
Krista Clusiau and Sally Harmon, piano duo

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Word of Life, in the beginning you spoke light into the world and nothing has been the same since. When the world did not recognize you, you drew near anyway. When there was no welcome, you made a home among us. Speak again to our hearts this day so that your light may shine in us and through us. Amen.

OPENING WORDS *"Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light"* by Jan Richardson

✧ **HYMN 107** *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever.

To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing;
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving-kindness.
The thunder of his anthems rolls to shatter all hatred and violence.

In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night. Though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light; be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.

✧ **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

Holy Light, we admit that we often shrink back from your brightness. We choose what is safe instead of what is true. We practice smallness instead of daring big love. We deny your image in others and sometimes even in ourselves. So, break open our hearts with your gentleness. Pull us toward honesty. Wrap us in grace that holds us without shame. Speak a new word into our lives so that we might live as people who have seen a great light.

✧ **RESPONSE 119**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Sacrament of Baptism

PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD

Jack Jordan Brown; child of Austin & Jordan Brown; grandchild of Russell & Jeanine Brown and Dwight & Mary Iverson; Stephanie Jacobs, Joe Iverson, and Caitlin & Justin Killoran, sponsors

✧ **RENUNCIATIONS**

✧ **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

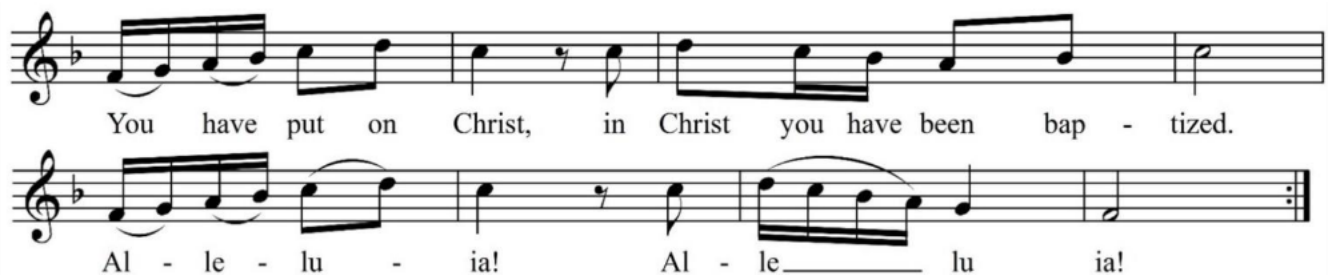
BAPTISM

WELCOME

...Let us welcome the newly baptized.

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ.

BAPTISMAL RESPONSE 491 *You Have Put On Christ*



✦ PASSING OF THE PEACE

GIFT OF MUSIC *Sleep Little Lion, Sleep Little Lamb* arr. Heather Sorenson
Second Avenue Singers + Proclamation Choir with Chamber Ensemble;
Erin Holdman, Erin Torpey, Sam Johnson, soloists; Rusty Bender, director

The Word

SCRIPTURE *John 1:1-14, pp. 966* Jane Roggensack, reader
Whirl Story Bible, pg. 170

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE Rev. Sarah M Bigwood

✦ **HYMN 377** *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

We dedicate this beloved hymn in honor of The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey's retirement at the end of 2025. This hymn has touched her heart throughout her ministry.

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.

God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain: In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path, and show me the way to the Father.
(Refrain)

I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus.
(Refrain)

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Responding to the Word

BEHOLD! THE LEGACY: Honoring Pastor Mary's Ministry

Pastor Mary, in loving memory of her mother, is wearing the stole she gave Mary for her ordination.

Rev. Dr. Steve Shive, Rev. Rick Raum, Rev. Dr. Paul H. Lang



MOMENT FOR MISSION

Use the QR code to access the secure giving portal on our website!

OFFERTORY

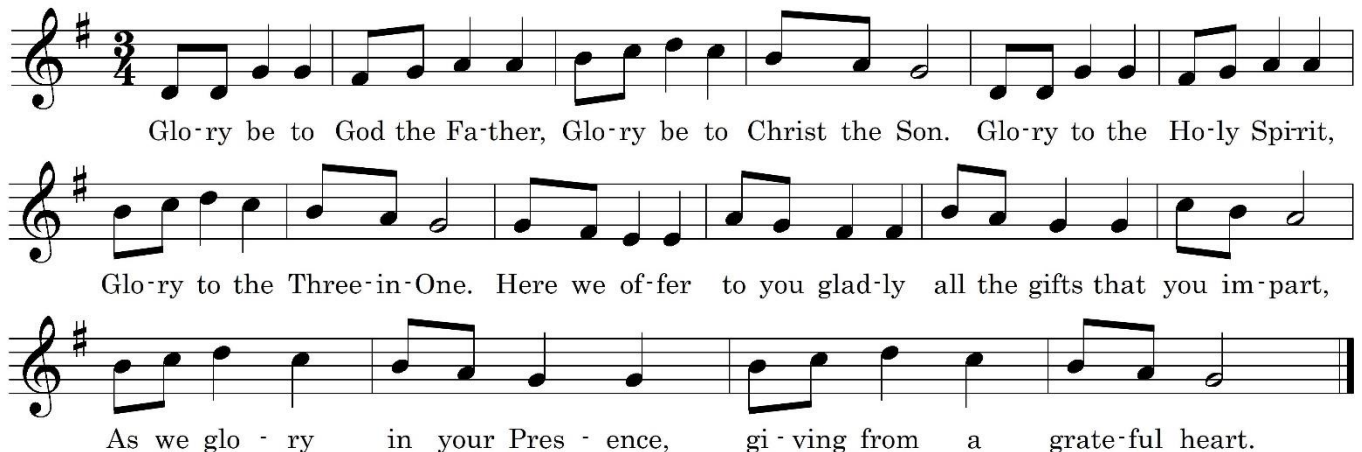
The Blessing

arr. Heather Sorenson

Second Avenue Singers + Proclamation Choir with Chamber Ensemble;
Erin Torpey, Sam Johnson, soloists; Rusty Bender, director

❖RESPONSE

Christmas Doxology



Glo-ry be to God the Fa-ther, Glo-ry be to Christ the Son. Glo-ry to the Ho-ly Spirit,
Glo-ry to the Three-in-One. Here we of-fer to you glad-ly all the gifts that you im-part,
As we glo - ry in your Pres - ence, gi - ving from a grate-ful heart.

❖PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

✦ HYMN 132

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Adeste Fideles

arr. David N. Johnson

Elliot Sander, organ

Thank you to The Bigwood Family on livestream and soundboard, Jane Roggensack for assisting in worship, and our Welcome Team: Sharon Secor, Gayla McGoldrick, Paula Christensen, Rick & Shirley Herberg, and Chuck & Geri Munro for taking such good care of us this morning. A special thank you to our musicians: Krista Clusiau, Sally Harmon, Elliot Sander, and the Second Avenue Singers + Proclamation Choir with Chamber Ensemble directed by Rusty Bender.

Second Avenue Singers: Micayla Brown, Taaren Haak, and Sarah Lang, sopranos; Krista Clusiau, Erin Holdman, Erin Torpey, and Shelley Zietz, altos; Sam Johnson, Rev. Dr. Paul H. Lang, Mike Wavra, and Nick Winistorfer, tenors; Jason Bolluyt, and Jack Lawrence, basses.

Proclamation (7-12) Choir: Liv Brito, Hazel Schmidt, Maggie Sundberg, and Eleanor Torpey, sopranos; Emma Bueng and Chelsea Erstad, altos; Nathan Bolluyt, Carsten Lawrence, and Ryan Schmidt, basses.

Chamber Ensemble: Jessica Poyzer, piano; Lauren Bontje, violin I, Matthew Pechtl, violin II, and Jayci Lawrence, cello.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF FARGO

Sunday Worship

December 28, 2025

Snow Camp! Thanks to our Presbytery, each student is eligible for a \$100 scholarship toward the retreat; please contact Director of Church Life, Rusty Bender at rbender@firstpresfargo.org for more information.

Snow Camp

Clearwater Forest
January 9-11
\$175
Grades 3-12

Register by
scanning
the QR code!



2025 Year End Giving: Please have all contributions intended for the 2025 giving year turned in to the church office by Monday, January 5th. The church office will be open from 9:00am—4:00pm that day. You can also use the drop box by the office door if you arrive after office hours. Any contributions received after the 5th will be recorded on 2026's giving record. If you would like to know the balance of your 2025 pledge, please email Jan Lundgren at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.org



Attention Snow Birds!

Please notify the office of your winter address along with the dates you'll be away. Year-end giving statements are mailed at special non-profit rates and will not forward even if you have a forwarding order at the post office.

Please help us stay in touch!

A Congregational Meeting has been called for today, December 28, following Worship in the Sanctuary for the purpose of dissolving the relationship between the First Presbyterian Church of Fargo and the Reverend Mary Jo E. Holtey.

Covenant of Prayer: Prakash Mathew and family upon the death of his wife, Jane Mathew; Chuck Richard and family upon the death of his wife, Kristen; Family and friends of Jim Gompf upon his death; David Hoffman, recovering from back surgery; Penny Andrist, immunotherapy; Beatrice Janaka's husband, James

CHILI COOK OFF

February 1 after worship



SAVE THE DATE!!: Our annual Chilli Cook-Off is right around the corner, so practice your recipes and come hungry on Sunday, February 1st! Sign-up sheets and online registration will be open soon, so keep an eye out for more information.

Make Stewardship Easy! You can set up the amount you've pledged as a recurring gift to the church. It couldn't be any easier! We offer both an ACH withdrawal from your bank account (no fees!) or Online Giving through our website. Recurring gifts are like the Crock Pot of church giving - "*fix it and forget it!*". Easy for you and it helps the church to see a steady stream of income through the year. Give it a try! There's an ACH Authorization form on our website under "Forms". Questions? Please contact Jan Lundgren in the church office at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.com.

Taizé Worship Service: Please note that the January Taizé Worship Service has been cancelled, and we will resume the service the following month on February 5th. Centering Prayer will resume January 8, 2026.

Undecorating the Sanctuary

Following worship Jan. 4

Members of the worship committee invite you to lend a hand to take down wreaths, sconces, and the big Christmas tree.



Hearing devices are available, please ask an usher for assistance.

Nursery: Staff will be present **beginning at 9:15** for infants-3 years, in the nursery complex on the 1st floor.

Activity Bags for Children: Fun-filled tote bags are located at both doors.

Restrooms: Restrooms are located in the Gathering Space and on the lower level.

Prayer Request Cards: Cards are in pew racks for your use. Prayers will be committed to God along with the other offerings and also lifted up in prayer by the staff.

Peace Candles: The candle burning on the chancel symbolizes peace. We ask guests to take a candle back to your church as a gift from us. Peace candles can be found at the Welcome Center, near the west doors.

Wi-Fi: Wi-Fi is available throughout the church. (password: community650)

FPC Officers

Session: Curt Brickman, Kathryn Byrd, Deb Dawson, Tom Dawson, Colleen Ford-Dunker, Jody Hudson, Kurt Kooyer, Dick Laraway, Bruce Maylath, Brian McClure, Jim McEvers, Sharon Secor, Paula Thomas (clerk), Jeff Wilkens, and Steve Wonderlich. **Deacons:** Paula Christensen, Toby Christensen, Dianne Connelly, Steve Dawson, Brenda Deckard, Sydney Goddard, David Hoffman, Gayla McGoldrick, Wayne Sander, Candy Shultz, Virginia Stern, Kathleen Thomas, Kevin Thomas, Debbie Tight, and Amy Wilkens.

Church Treasurer: Sherri Stern.

Church Staff

The Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood: *Head of Staff, Pastor*

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey: *Associate Pastor*

The Rev. Daniel Billings: *Parish Associate*

The Rev. Cathie Bishop: *Parish Associate*

Rusty Bender: *Director of Church Life*

Bryan Poyzer: *Adult Choir Director*

Elliot Sander: *Interim Organist*

Carrie Lawrence: *Sunday School Coordinator*

Jan Lundgren: *Business Manager*

Casey LeMier: *Communications & Admin Assistant*

Rick Fiebiger: *Facilities Manager*

Drew Brovold: *Custodian*

**Staff emails are: (first initial and last name of person)
@firstpresfargo.org**

L: Live Stream Option, H: Hybrid, Z: Zoom
Times shown in *italics* indicate am.

Sunday, December 28

11:25 Congregational Meeting

11:30 Fellowship with Former Pastors

Monday, December 29

Office Closed

Tuesday, December 30

Office Closed

Wednesday, December 31

Office Closed

Thursday, January 1, 2026

Office Closed

Friday, January 2

No Church Events

Saturday, January 3

No Church Events

Sunday, January 4

10:30 Worship Service & Communion (L)

11:30 Fellowship

Reminder: Use the QR code found in the bulletin to access the secure giving portal on our website. Also, like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram!

For Your Information

December 21, 2025 Attendance: 233

175 in person

58 households livestreamed

Contribution information will be available 1/4



Church Information

Office Hours:

M-TH, 9:00 am-4:00 pm

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org

650 2nd Ave. N.

Fargo, ND 58102

Christmas Office Hours

The church office will be closed
December 24th through January 1st

