



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.

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.*

We Gather in Christ

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Show us your ways, O Lord! Lead us in your truth and teach us. Open our eyes, minds, and hearts to know your will and to follow it. Reveal your vision for us and keep us focused and faithful to what you would have us do. Bring us together to worship and work for your purpose and move us forward into your future. Amen.

PRELUDE

*Trio, Bicinium and Meditation on
"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"
Sally Harmon, organist*

arr. Sadowski

WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

UPDATE FROM THE PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Maria Weller

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

The story begins with hope for a child—

A child, born of woman, like us;

A child who will lead us,

A child who will inspire us.

A child who will be our living hope.

We give thanks for the coming child, Jesus.

Let us worship God!

***LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE**

How can we share hope?

East side: When others are weary and broken, we strengthen them.

West side: The candle that takes its light from another has light to share.

How can we share hope?

East side: When we are weary and tired, we lean on the hope others provide.

West side: Jesus says, "Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

On this third Sunday of Advent, let us light a candle to share hope.

***HYMN 363:** *Rejoice, the Lord is King*

**Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**Our Savior, Jesus, reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**Rejoice in glorious hope!
For Christ, the Judge, shall come
and gather all the saints
to their eternal home.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

As John the Baptist called the people to repent,
as Jesus calls us now,
we turn to the one who is both judge and savior,
trusting that repentance opens the door to new life,
and that peace beyond all measure has been promised to us.
Let us confess our sins.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God, we live as if your light had never overcome the darkness. We confess that we stumble in shadows rather than walk in the light of Christ. We fear to have hope because sometimes it feels safer to sit in the dark of our despair. We wrap ourselves in self-doubt and do not trust that you are bigger than any problem we can conjure. But you come to us, a tiny human, to show us what our humanity may be like—full of promise and justice and hope for life in the household of God. Restore in us that hope that lets our light reflect your glory and proclaim the good news of your love. *[time for silent confession]*

***DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Hear the good news God speaks: I love you. I forgive you. I restore you to new life.
Friends, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

***RESPONSE:** *Come, Come Emmanuel*

Two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The melody is simple and repetitive. The lyrics are: 'Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.' The first staff ends with a long horizontal line, and the second staff ends with a double bar line.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Angels from the Realms of Glory
7-12 Choir; Bryan Poyzer, director

arr. Poyzer

CHILDREN'S TIME: Penny Andrist

The Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: reader, Sue Van Osdel

Holy Word,

you are our guide and ultimate assurance.

By your Holy Spirit,

open us to your promises and commands

and shower us again with the fire of your love. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Luke 1:68-79

‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

He has raised up a mighty savior for us

in the house of his servant David,

as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,

and has remembered his holy covenant,

the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,

to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,

might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness

before him all our days.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

to give knowledge of salvation to his people

by the forgiveness of their sins.

By the tender mercy of our God,

the dawn from on high will break upon us,

to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace.’

May God bless the reading and hearing of this portion of the holy Word.

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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

SERMON: The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

***HYMN 100:** *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout*

**My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?**

Refrain:

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

**Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)**

**From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)**

**Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. (Refrain)**

***PROFESSION OF FAITH:** *Liturgy, Justice and the Reign of God Integrating Vision and Practice*

Jesus has taught us to speak of hope as the coming of God's Kingdom. We believe that God is at work in our world turning hopeless and evil situations into good. We believe that goodness and justice and love will triumph in the end, and that tyranny and oppression cannot last forever. One day "all tears will be wiped away" and "the lamb will lie down with the lion." True peace and true reconciliation are not only desirable, they are assured and guaranteed. This is our faith, and our hope.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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

OFFERING



A reminder that offering plates are at the west & north doors of the sanctuary to receive your offering and yellow attendance cards, or use the QR code to access the secure giving portal on our website!

OFFERTORY

People, Look East
Westminster Ringers; Jill Post, director

arr. Moglebust

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

***HYMN 105:** *People, Look East*

People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.

Make your house fair as you are able;
trim the hearth and set the table.

People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.

Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.

People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled.

Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.

People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

*Theme and Pedal Solo on
"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"*

arr. Sadowski

Please stay for the congregational meeting immediately following worship.



December 12, 2021

Covenant Of Prayer: Jennifer; Hannah; Bella Garcia; those who are experiencing homelessness in our community; and our sister congregation in Chogoria, Kenya.

Congregational Meeting Called: After worship today, a congregational meeting has been called to review the 2021 financials, to receive the 2022 budget from Session, and to approve any changes to the terms of call for the Rev. Holtey. Summaries will be handed out at the meeting; more detailed budget info can be found in the office.

Poinsettias: It's time to order your Christmas Poinsettia! You can find order forms online, at the Info Kiosk, and in the December Messenger. Orders and payments should be delivered to the office **no later than noon tomorrow**. Please write a separate check for your poinsettia; do not include with your offering.

A Christmas Ring and Sing-along: This FREE concert on **Monday, December 13 at 7:00 pm** is presented by the FM Area Music Club. Several area organists; the women's choir, The Noteables; and the handbell choir, BELLISSIMO, are participating in this family-friendly event with narration from Pastor Mary. FPC is well-represented in the membership of these groups!

ManUP: ManUP, a men's Bible study, kicks off its monthly sessions on **December 14 at 6:45 am via ZOOM**. The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month, October-May. Intended to help men understand what the Bible says in relation to what is expected of a Christian man, the study this year examines the Epistle to the Hebrews. A copy of the study guide can be obtained at Hebrews: An Open Door to God | Presbyterian Mission Agency or you can request a copy and ask for a Zoom invitation from Bruce Maylath at ring4linguist@yahoo.com. No advance preparation is required for each month's study.

PW News: PW Board meets via ZOOM on **Tuesday, December 14 at 10:00 am**. There is no General Meeting this month. Also via ZOOM, the **PW Bible Study, held Tuesday, December 21 at 2:00 pm**, will focus on Lesson 4, *Ruth and Loyal Love*, led by Pastor Holtey.

For December, we will collect aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen, etc. Please place your donations in the YWCA bin in the coat room. We will also be collecting winter items for men - such as winter hats, hand warmers, winter gloves, long underwear, and water bottles in the New Life Center bin.

New Pilgrimage Class: January's Pilgrimage class is new and meant for current participants and FPC congregants who may be interested in becoming part of The Pilgrimage ministry. Titled, *Seeking God Together*, the 2-session class will provide small group experience steeped in contemplative Christian tradition. Kit O'Neill will teach the class with current pilgrim guides as small group facilitators. Recommended reading for the class is, *The Pilgrim's Compass*, by Paul H. Lang, available in the church library.

Contact Mike Wavra (wavramw@aol.com) or Judy Rippentrop (jirippentrop@yahoo.com) by **December 15, 2021, to indicate your interest**.

Join the Christmas Choir! There is a short-term opportunity to join the choir for Carols by Candlelight and Christmas Eve services. **Rehearsals are in the choir room at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, December 15, and 6:15 pm on December 22** to rehearse the Christmas Eve anthem. Please keep in mind that Session requires all adults participating in the Music programs of the church be fully vaccinated against Covid-19, and that we require wearing masks in the building.

Sunday School Christmas Party: Jesus is coming, and we're all invited to the party! Come to the Sunday School for All Ages party **December 19 at 9:15 am**. Start in the Social Hall. Rick Raum will read a Christmas story from his and Betty's book, *Drive-Through Christmas Eve*. (They will be on hand to sign books before and after worship for \$10; \$4 will be given back to children's ministry). Then collect puzzle pieces by making cards and gifts, singing Christmas songs, and hearing stories. Be sure to stay for the church service for treats and nativity afterward!

Carols by Candlelight: Join us in the Sanctuary on **December 19 at 6:30 pm** for *The Weary World Rejoices* which will feature our church's vocal and instrumental ensembles plus congregational carol-singing and "candle" lighting in a celebration of word and seasonal music. Christmas treats will be served "to-go" after the service. This service will also be livestreamed.

Christmas Joy Offering: This offering supports the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, honoring the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families during times of critical financial need. It also supports Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, and leadership receiving much-needed assistance while they discover and pursue their professional goals. Christmas Joy envelopes may be found in the pew racks, as well as the Welcome Info Kiosk, or use the online giving portal found on the church website. This offering will be **dedicated on Dec. 19**, but collected through the end of December.

Meals on Wheels Volunteers Needed! Please call 701-293-1440 to sign up to volunteer. For more volunteer information go to valleyseniors.org

A Peek @ Next Week: We will enjoy music by the 2-6 Choir, the Sanctuary Choir, and Genesis Ringers. Carols by Candlelight is that evening!

Overflow Seating for Christmas Services: We want everyone to feel comfortable attending the Carols by Candlelight and/or the 5pm or 7pm Christmas Eve Services. To ease any congestion in the sanctuary, or for those who want more distanced space, the TV monitors throughout the building will be on during those services. You may choose to watch from an upstairs classroom, a lower-level meeting room, at the West entry doors, or the nursery area. The services will also be live streamed at firstpresfargo.org.

Hearing devices and large print copies of today's hymns 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)

Church Staff

Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey-*Head of Staff, Associate Pastor*

Sally Harmon-*Music Coordinator & Organist*

Bryan Poyzer-*Adult Choir Director*

Jan Lundgren-*Business Manager*

Monica Gelinske-*Administrative Assistant*

Penny Andrist-*Children's Ministry Coordinator*

Kayla Bones-*Youth & Young Adult Ministry Coordinator*

Rick Fiebiger-*Facilities Manager*

Drew Brovold-*Custodian*

All staff emails are:

(first initial and last name of person)[@firstpresfargo.org](mailto: @firstpresfargo.org)

FPC Officers

Session: Kim Carter, Tom Clusiau, Lisa Edison-Smith, Colleen Ford-Dunker, Bruce Furness, Dick Henderson, Ryan Johnston, Kurt Kooyer, Elaine Rudd (clerk), Scott Swanholm, Paula Thomas, and Kevin Tobosa, Becky Trumbo, and Jeff Wilkens.

Deacons: Brenda Deckard, Ed Deckard, Rick Herberg, Beatrice Janaka, Jane Mathew (moderator), Bob Morton, Karen Rivers, Andrea Smith, Kathleen Thomas, Debbie Tight, and Amy Wilkens.

Treasurer: Sherri Stern

L: Live Stream Option, H: Hybrid, Z: Zoom

Sunday, December 12

11:30 Congregational Meeting / Annual Cookie Walk

12:00 Confirmation

Monday, December 13

7:30 Music Club Program (L)–FREE

Tuesday, December 14

6:45 ManUP (Z)

8:30 Bulletin Articles Due

10:00 PW Board (Z)

5:30 Board of Deacons

Wednesday, December 15

5:30 St. Andrew's Brass / Genesis Ringers

6:15 2-6 Choir / 7-12 Choir

6:30 Westminster Ringers

7:00 Youth Group

7:30 Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, December 16

1:00 Compass #2

Friday, December 17 *No Church Events*

Saturday, December 18

1:00 CbyC Rehearsal

3:00 Genesis Ringers

Sunday, December 19

9:15 Sunday School Christmas Party

10:30 Worship Service

12:00 Confirmation

5:30 Handbell Warmup

6:00 Orchestra/Choir Warmup

6:30 Carols by Candlelight (L)

For Your Information

December 5 Worship Attendance:

88 in person, 58 Livestreamed

Contributions Received: \$14,122.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

M-TH, 8:30 am-4:00 pm

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org