



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

Holy God, when Jesus was baptized in the Jordan the heavens opened, the Spirit descended, and your voice affirmed your love in Jesus for the healing of the human race and all creation. By water and word you lovingly invite us into this same life-giving mission. May your Spirit, moving like a stream of water flowing from its source, work in us this day to realize your vision of a world made new in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

PRELUDE

Epiphany Carol Settings
Susan Clambey, guest organist

arr. by Clambey

WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

The voice of God resounds upon the water.

The Spirit of the Lord hovers over the stream.

The Son of God is named, "Beloved."

And all who worship shout out, "Glory!"

Ascribe to the Lord majesty and strength.

Let us worship God in holy splendor!

HYMN 35: *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!

All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near;

join me in glad adoration!

**Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!**

**Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
granted in what he ordaineth?**

Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!

All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!

Let the amen sound from his people again;

gladly for aye we adore him.

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

God loves us and calls us each by name.

Knowing we are eternally forgiven and infinitely loved,
let us boldly confess our sins before God.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

We are precious in your sight, yet we often forget that we are your beloved. We confess that our love is fickle and inconstant. We follow selfish goals and deny that our way of life harms others and hurts your world. We are sorry and we want to change. Create in us a clean heart, strengthen our resolve, reconcile us one to another, and bless us with your peace. Amen.

***DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Beloved, God forgives your sins;
know that you are pardoned
and be at peace to love the Lord and serve the world.

RESPONSE: *Love has Come



Love has come: a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies.



See, all heav-en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of joy a - ris - es:



Love! Love! Born un-to you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo-ry to God on high!_____

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Shall We Gather at the River
Sanctuary Choir; Bryan Poyzer, director

arr. Bock

CHILDREN'S TIME: Penny Andrist

The Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

Jean Pladson

Glorious God,
when Jesus was baptized for your healing mission
the heavens opened in a flash of glory
as vision and voice blazed upon the waters.
May your Spirit so burn in us
that we hear your word translated into deed
and follow Jesus in paths of justice, right relationship, and peace. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Acts 8:14-17

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

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

SECOND LESSON: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Whirl Story Bible p. 202

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

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

SERMON:

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

***HYMN 96:** *On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry*

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be every life from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail you as our Savior, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without your grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.**

**Stretch forth your hand; our health restore,
and make us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine
and fill the world with love divine.**

***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.

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

Oh, How Beautiful the Sky
Susan Clambey, organist

Manz

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

HYMN 490: *Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters

**Wash, O God, your sons and daughters,
newborn creatures of your womb.
Number them among your people,
raised like Christ from death and tomb.
Weave them garments bright and sparkling;
compass them with love and light.
Fill, anoint them; send your Spirit,
holy dove and heart's delight.**

**Every day we need your nurture;
by your milk may we be fed.
Let us join your feast, partaking
cup of blessing, living bread.
God, renew us; guide our footsteps,
free from sin and all its snares,
one with Christ in living, dying,
by your Spirit, children, heirs.**

**O how deep your holy wisdom!
Unimagined, all your ways!
To your name be glory, honor!
With our lives we worship, praise!
We your people stand before you,
water-washed and Spirit-born.
By your grace, our lives we offer.
Re-create us; God, transform!**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Praise to the Lord

arr. By Clambey

Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod;

With its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?
Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace.

Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.
When we reach the shining river, laying every burden down;
Grace our spirits will deliver, and provide us a robe and a crown!
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river, that flows by the throne of God.