



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 10, 2023

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

Bist Du Bei Mir

J. S. Bach/arr. Weybright

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J. S. Bach/arr. Myra Hess

Andrew Froelich & Sally Harmon, two pianos

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Most High God, for you nothing is impossible. Through a poor young woman in a small town you gave birth to your realm of endless glory. By your Holy Spirit, fill us with new life and hope and overshadow us with your power and grace so that we, like Mary, might be your servants, bearing witness to the promise of your Word; through Jesus Christ, who is coming to reign.

HYMN 82

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (vs 1)
(remain seated)

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The McGoldrick Family

✧ CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Cathie Bishop

Now is not the time to be afraid.

Now is the time to sing.

My soul magnifies the Lord.

My spirit rejoices in God my savior.

For the Mighty One has done great things.

Let us worship God!

✧ **HYMN 82**

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (verse 2)

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,

born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;

by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

✧ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Compassionate, Forgiving God, we trespass on your mercy and take your favor for granted. We think only of ourselves. We forget the lessons of those who came before us, and ignore our responsibility to those who will follow us. We grow proud and seek power. We do not see the destruction of our actions and how it distances us from you. We do not recognize our hunger for what it is, or where it leads us. We grow faint. Bring us home to you, Merciful God.

✧ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Lully, Lulla, Lullay

Phillip Stopford

Sanctuary Choir; Shawn Niesen, director; Lauren Bontje, violin;

Emily Erpelding, violin; Zoe Booth, viola; Jayci Lawrence, cello

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Penny Andrist

Lauren Bontje, violin; Eleanor Torpey, Mary

✧ **RESPONSE**

Rejoice, Rejoice, O Mary



Re-joyce, re-joyce, O Ma-ry God's plan for you is clear. The



babe that you now car - ry, our Sav-ior will ap-pear. The



pro-phet has fore-told it: The time is drawing nigh; In



Beth-le-hem of Jud - ah the ang-els fill the sky.

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:26-38, pp. 931

Jane Roggensack, reader

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.** *Whirl Story Bible pg. 174*

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

*PC(USA) Brief Statement of Faith
(adapted for use with children)*

We belong to God.

**We trust in Jesus who suffered like we suffer
and broke the power of sin
so we can live full lives.**

**We trust in God who created us good
and helps us live with one another in healthy community
and stays faithful to us forever.**

**We trust in the Holy Spirit who gives us the power to love
as deeply as Jesus
so we can help others and live joyful lives.**

We join to celebrate God's love through Jesus.

Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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



MINUTE FOR MISSION – the Toothbrush Tree

Ginger Deitz

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

OFFERTORY

Canticle of the Turning

arr. Karen Thompson

Westminster Ringers; Jill Post, director

❖RESPONSE

While We Are Waiting, Come

While we are wait - ing, come; _____ while we are wait - ing, come. _____

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el, while we are wait - ing, come. _____

❖PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

❖HYMN 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!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

❖BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

God's Time Is Best

J. S. Bach/arr. Blythe Owen

Andrew Froelich & Sally Harmon, two pianos



Festival of Trees: This year’s Missions will include the Mitten Tree & Sox Box, the Food Tree, the Toothbrush Tree, and new this year, **the Rainbow Bridge Tree.** Rainbow Bridge is the only Safe Exchange/Supervised Parenting Time Center in the FM area. These are tags on the tree for you to take: **items for Gingerbread Houses:** Graham crackers, candy, frosting, gingerbread kits; **Cookie Decorating Supplies:** packages of 6 sugar cookies, frosting, decorations; **gift cards** for parents to buy gifts for their children; **monetary contributions** for staff to enhance the holiday experience for families. Visit the trees in the west foyer for further details on ALL these mission opportunities.

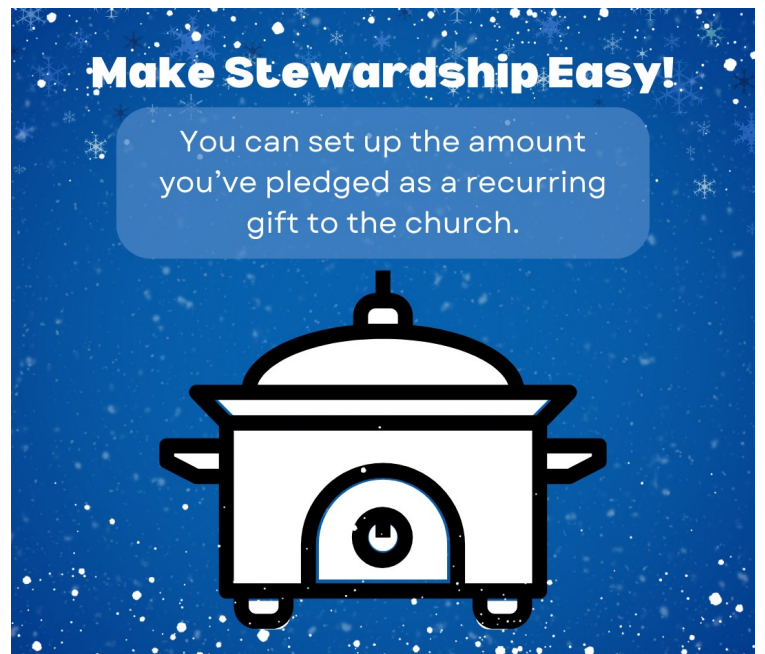


2023 Year End Giving: Please have all contributions intended for the 2023 giving year turned in to the church office by Tuesday, January 2nd. The church office will be open from 9:00AM through 4:00PM that day. You can also use the drop box by the office door if you arrive after office hours. Any contributions received after that date will be recorded on your 2024 giving record. If you would like to know the balance of your 2023 pledge, please email Jan Lundgren.

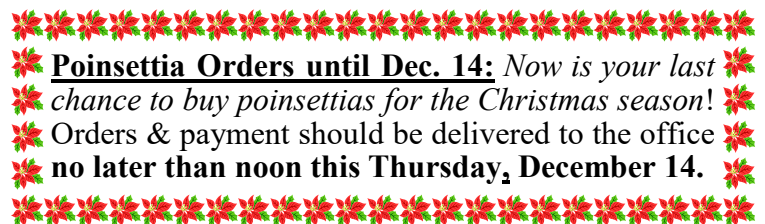


Covenant Of Prayer: Marion Anderson and family upon the death of her husband, Ed. Funeral services will be at Boulger Funeral Home tomorrow at 10:00am; Claudia Hansen upon the death of her nephew, Raven.

Photo & Information Updates: The holidays are a great time for family pictures! If you would like to update your family’s entry in the church directory, email Casey in the church office, or bring a hard copy in to be scanned. This is also an opportunity to make sure all your information is up to date! The office is hoping to put out a Hard Copy Directory in early 2024.



Recurring gifts are like the **Crock Pot** of church giving - “fix it and forget it”! Easy for you and helps the church see a steady stream of income throughout the year. Give it a try! We offer both an ACH withdrawal from your bank account (no fees!) or Online Giving through our website. Questions? Contact Jan Lundgren at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.org



Through the **Christmas Joy Offering**, we reflect God’s perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us—past, present and future—who have pointed us to God! This offering helps support retired church workers and families who are now in financial crisis, and emerging church leaders like students in schools and colleges equipping communities of color to bring their gifts of service to the world. Envelopes may be found in the West entryway, the Narthex and pew racks, or simply write “Christmas Joy” on the memo of your check. Or, you may choose to give online through the giving portal found on the church website.

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)

FPC Officers

Session: Abi Carlson, Kim Carter, Deb Dawson, Tom Dawson, Tetteh Dottey, Colleen Ford-Dunker, Jody Hudson, Kurt Kooyer, Dick Laraway, Carrie Lawrence, Bruce Maylath, Brian McClure, Elaine Rudd (clerk), Becky Trumbo, and Jeff Wilkens. **Deacons:** Paula Christensen, Toby Christensen, Steve Dawson, Brenda Deckard, Ed Deckard (treasurer), Gracia Fulwiler, Beatrice Janaka, Jane Mathew (moderator), Karen Rivers, Donna Rummens, Candy Shultz, Virginia Stern, Kathleen 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*

Sally Harmon-*Organist*

Pam Burns-*Music Ministry Coordinator*

Shawn Neisen-*Adult Choir Director*

Penny Andrist-*Children's Ministry Coordinator*

Kayla Bones-*Youth & Young Adult Ministry 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 10

11:30 Fellowship & Puzzle Exchange in JRR

Monday, December 11

5:30 EduCon Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 12

6:45 Men's Bible Study

5:30 Board of Deacons Meeting

6:30 Personnel Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 13

10:00 PW Bible Study Leaders

12:00 M&F Committee Meeting (Z)

5:00 Wednesday Activities Dinner

5:30 St. Andrew's Brass

5:30 Genesis Ringers

6:00 Health Fair Committee Meeting (H)

6:15 Children & Youth Choirs

6:30 Westminster Ringers

7:00 Youth Group

7:30 Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, December 14

12:00 Poinsettia Orders Due!

5:30 Nurturing Families

Friday, December 15

No Church Events

Saturday, December 16

10:00 PW Leah Circle (H)

Sunday, December 17

10:00 Cookie Walk

10:30 Worship Service (L)

11:30 Fellowship

6:30 Carols by Candlelight (L)

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 3 Attendance: 236

195 in person

41 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$4,479.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

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

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org