



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.

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child
Sally Harmon, organist

arr. Paul Manz

INTROIT

How Far is it to Bethlehem?

arr. Robert Sterling

Friendship Choir (K-2); Erin Torpey, director; Sally Harmon, piano;
Alyssa Miller, cello; Krista Clusiau, flute

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Loving God, you sent your only son, Jesus, into the world, so that all might know of your love. Remind us daily that we are your precious children, too. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Jaden Argall, Mari Follingstad,
Jonah Torpey

✧ CALL TO WORSHIP

O sing to the Lord a new song,

God's salvation is at hand.

Celebrate the coming of Salvation.

Celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace.

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people.

Let us worship God!

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

❖ **CAROL 115** *Away in a Manger (verses 1 & 2)*

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay

The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

❖ **CAROL 145** *What Child is This (verses 1 & 2)*

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

❖ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

God of Joy, we come to celebrate again the impending arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. The news is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is bright enough to illuminate every corner of our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world, yet we still find ourselves resentful that your love extends to those whom we deem to be unworthy. God, you invite us into the light of the stable where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love. Give us the strength and courage to join you at the manger. Amen.

❖ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC *There Was Love* Mark Burrows

Kids of the Kingdom (3-6) Choir; Pam Burns, director;
Milo Thorp and Eleanor May, soloists; Maggie Sundberg, reader;
Virginia Stern, piano; Alyssa Miller, cello; Krista Clusiau, flute

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Penny Andrist

Alyssa Miller, cello; Brian Peterson, Innkeeper

❖ **RESPONSE** *Rejoice, Rejoice, Innkeeper*



Re-joice, re-joice, Inn-keep-er, there is no need to fear. The

stab-le you prov - i - ded will hold the babe most dear. The
 one whose name is Jes - us will in the man-ger lay all
 swad-dled, warm and sleep-y, 'mid an-i-mals and hay.

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:1-7, pp. 624

Claudia Hansen, reader

Luke 2:1-7, pp. 933

Whirl Story Bible, pg. 182

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

SERMON

Lying in the Manger

The Rev. Sarah M Bigwood

✧ CAROL 146

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
 there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
 Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
 Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;
 heaven's star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.
 Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;
 all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
 he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.
 Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
 praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

✧ PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Heidelberg Catechism
 (adapted from questions 35 & 36)

Jesus “was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary” which means, that the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, a truly human nature so that he might also become David’s true descendant, like his brothers and sisters in every way except for sin. For this reason, the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit me because Christ is my mediator and, in God’s sight, he covers with his innocence and perfect holiness the sinfulness in which I was conceived.

Background: Soon after Luther posted his ninety-five theses, Lutherans and Reformed Christians established The Heidelberg Catechism to help settle their divisions. Their work was completed in 1562. Each question of

the catechism is personal, addressed to "you." Its theology is both catholic, universal in appeal, and evangelical, setting forth the gospel of Jesus Christ. Providing a basis for peaceful coexistence between Lutheran and Reformed Christians. The influence of the Heidelberg Catechism in the church's preaching and teaching continues to be felt in Germany, Austria, Holland, Hungary, parts of Eastern Europe, Scotland, Canada, and the United States.

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 Food Tree

Ryan Johnston

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

OFFERTORY

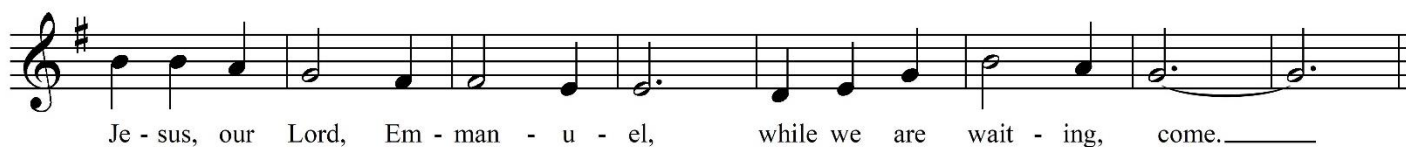
Go, Tell It on the Mountain

arr. Elizabeth Campbell

Proclamation (7-12) Choir; Shawn Neisen, director;
Sally Harmon, piano

✦ RESPONSE

While We Are Waiting, Come



✦ PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

✦ CAROL 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!

❖ **BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
Sally Harmon, organist

arr. Wilbur Held

If you purchased a poinsettia, please review the insert below to confirm there are no spelling errors, and that your information is complete.

In Loving Memory of...	By...
In memory of Chester & Myrna Ahlin, L.J. and Virginia Boekelheide, and Peggy Gaynor	Thomas & Jane Ahlin
William Carter	Kim Carter
Doug Hamilton	Deb Dawson
Jacob Dawson	Steve & Vicki Dawson
Bob & Edith, Chuck, and Gary Dawson	Kathy Fox Family, Tom & Georgia Dawson Family, and Steve & Vicki Dawson Family
Thomas Drayton	Polly Drayton
Glenn Filipi	Patricia Filipi
Doug Froelich	Andrew & Nancy Froelich
Ross & Peg Robson, Sandy Mathew, Joel & Vivian Broberg, Loran Guenther, Oscar & Jean Lindgren, Edith Dawson, and our parents	Bruce & Lorraine Furness
Stephen I Morse, Elmer & Phyllis Haak	Tim & Linda Haak
Paul Gulbrandson and Do & Tod Gunkelman	Sally and David Harmon
Our parents	Fraser & Jan Harrison
Douglas & Evelyn Hoffman	David Hoffman
Mark Holman, Robert Aspelund, Inez & Oliver Holman, and Jim Rosendahl	Bobbie Holman
Arlo & Eleanor Lindsay	Ann Lindsay Howard
A.J & Mildred Parsons Larew, Peggy Gaynor	Donald E. Larew
Wilson & Reba Laird and Neal & Luella McClure	Brian & Dorothy McClure
Our parents Ila & Harvey Coon and Jean & Gerry Shultz	Candy & David Shultz
Tom Tight, Marjorie & Fred Tight, Abbie & Bob Peterson	Debbie & Bob Tight
Our parents	Tom & Sue Van Osdel
Sheryl, Larry, and Dolly, our parents	Jeff & Amy Wilkens

In Honor of...	By...
Our grandchildren, Elizabeth and Erik Anderson	Ed & Marion Anderson
Our children and grandchildren	Bruce & Lorraine Furness
Monna Rae Morse, Taaren Haak, Lea & Andrew Beck	Tim & Linda Haak
Our family	Fraser & Jan Harrison
Our family	Ted & Barb Kessel

To the Glory of God	By...
	Dick & Vicki Laraway

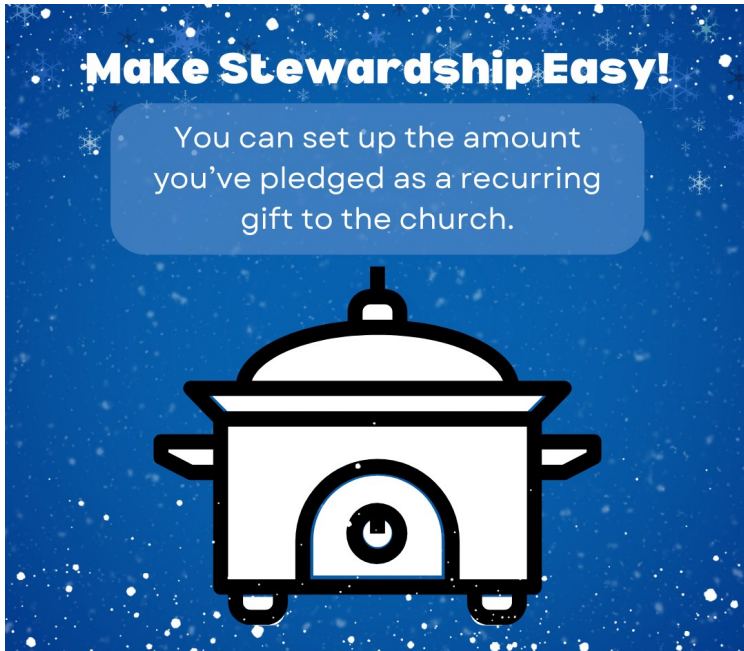


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FARGO

3rd Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Would you like to ring the bell for the Salvation Army? Stop at the Festival of Trees desk and pick up a flyer with the link and phone number to register to ring the bell this holiday season!



Make Stewardship Easy!

You can set up the amount you've pledged as a recurring gift to the church.



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



Lessons and Carols

December 31st
10:30am

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.

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.



SING WE NOW OF

Christmas

CAROLS BY
CANDLELIGHT

December 17th @ 6:30pm

First Presbyterian Church of Fargo

Join us tonight at 6:30 pm for Carols by Candlelight! This year's theme is *Sing We Now of Christmas*, and will feature all of our church's vocal and instrumental ensembles and congregational carol-singing in a celebration of word and seasonal music. Christmas goodies will be served following the service.

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.

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 17

11:30 Fellowship & Cookie Walk

6:30 Carols by Candlelight

Monday, December 18

No Church Events

Tuesday, December 19

9:30 PW Circles

1:00 PW Circle

Wednesday, December 20

12:00 Messenger Deadline

5:00 Wednesday Activities Dinner

5:30 St. Andrew's Brass

6:00 Orchestra Rehearsal

6:15 3-6 & 7-12 Choir Rehearsals

6:30 Westminster Ringers

6:30 Sanctuary Choir

7:00 Youth Group

Thursday, December 21

5:30 Nurturing Families

Friday, December 22

No Church Events

Saturday, December 23

No Church Events

Sunday, December 24

10:30 Worship Service (L)

11:30 Fellowship

5:00 Christmas Eve Service (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 10 Attendance: 260

212 in person

48 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$27,831.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

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

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org

A Dove's Tale:

From Ruffled to Rejoicing

December 24, 2023 @ 5:00pm

A Christmas Eve story shared through
music, characters, and dance.

