



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.

August, 24, 2025

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

How Blest Are They Who Trust in Christ

arr. Sander

Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

Elliot Sander, organ

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Your glory and power, O God, surround us. We are your people, thirsty for the living water you alone can give. When we consider how you have helped us, giving us a spring that gushes up to eternal life, we cling to you, singing praises with joyful lips, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP

Lisa McEvers

O God, you are our God;

we seek you with all our hearts.

Our souls thirst for you,

in a dry and weary land.

You are our help,

and in the shadow of your wings we sing for joy.

You fill our hearts with steadfast love,

Let us worship God.

❖ **HYMN 267**

Come, Christians, Join to Sing

Come, Christians, join to sing: Alleluia! Amen!

Loud praise to Christ our King: Alleluia! Amen!

Let all, with heart and voice, before his throne rejoice;
praise is his gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high: Alleluia! Amen!

Let praises fill the sky: Alleluia! Amen!

He is our guide and friend; to us he'll condescend;
his love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again: Alleluia! Amen!

Life shall not end the strain: Alleluia! Amen!

On heaven's blissful shore his goodness we'll adore,
singing forevermore: Alleluia! Amen!

❖ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Holy God, we confess that we have grown complacent in our response to you. You set before us a rich feast of blessing, but we are drawn to lesser things that cannot satisfy. You call us to attend to urgent needs in the world, but we indulge our own desires. Forgive us when we fall short of your claim upon our lives. Disturb our complacency and quicken our desire for a more fruitful life. Be patient, we pray, as we amend who we are, in the hope of becoming who you intend us to be. We ask this in the name of our Savior, your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

❖ **RESPONSE 48**

Rain Down

Rain down; rain down;
rain down your love on your people.

Rain down; rain down;
rain down your love, God of life.

❖ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Anada Pa Gael

arr. Gordon Duncan

Curt Brickman and Becky Dura, bagpipe duet

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 63:1-8, pp. 516

Luke 13:1-9, pp. 950

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

SERMON

The Peerless Artist

The Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

✧ **HYMN 833**

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.

✧ **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

The Confession of Belhar (Excerpts from 10.7)

We believe that God has revealed God's self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people. God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is, in a special way, the God of the destitute, the poor, and the wronged; that God calls the church to follow God in this, for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry; God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind; God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows, and blocks the path of the ungodly. The church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; and that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests.

Background: The Confession of Belhar was written in response to the sin of Apartheid in South Africa which disrupted the church's unity, created division among the children of God, and constructed unjust systems that stole life from God's creation. The church's complicity with racial separation kept Christians from worshipping and coming to the Lord's Table together. In 2016, The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved the Confession of Belhar as part of the Book of Confessions because it believed the clarity of Belhar's witness to unity, reconciliation, and justice might help the church speak and act with similar clarity at a time when it faces division, racism, and injustice.

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



OFFERING MESSAGE

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

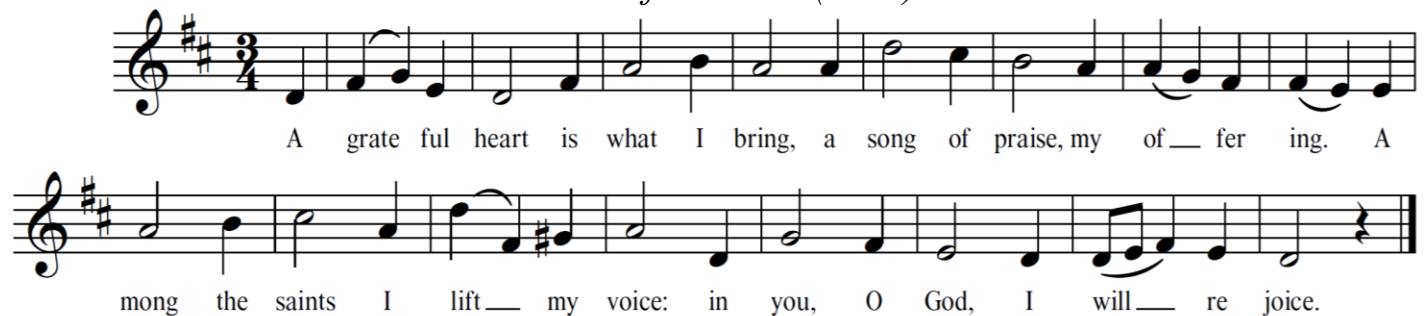
OFFERTORY

Then Jesus Came
Elliot Sander, piano

Homer Rodeheaver

❖RESPONSE 652

A Grateful Heart (vs. 1)

Musical notation for a two-part setting of 'A Grateful Heart'. The first part is a melody in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time, starting with a treble clef. The lyrics 'A grate ful heart is what I bring, a song of praise, my of— fer ing. A' are written below the notes. The second part continues the melody, with lyrics 'mong the saints I lift— my voice: in you, O God, I will— re joice.' The notation includes various note values, rests, and a final double bar line.

❖PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

❖HYMN 611

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee; earth and heaven reflect thy rays;
stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Mortals, join the happy chorus which the morning stars began.
Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife.
Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

✧ **BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Lead On, O King Eternal
Elliot Sander, organ

arr. Sander

*Thank you to Robby Bigwood and Tetteh Dottey on livestream and soundboard,
Lisa McEvers for leading us in worship, and our Welcome Team: Deb Dawson,
Wayne Sander, David Hoffman, and Marcia Foss and all our ushers for taking such
good care of us this morning.*

*A special thank you to our musicians: Elliot Sander, Curt Brickman, and Becky
Dura.*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF FARGO



Sunday Worship

August 24, 2025

Serving at Micah's Mission: The signup sheets for September and October are on the Volunteer Opportunities Board in the West Foyer. Come and help with this vital project! If you wish to participate, but are unable to prepare or serve, consider making a donation to cover the cost of the meal. Thank you for your generosity of time and resources!



First Music Rehearsals

Save the date!

Adult Choir starts 9/3

Children & Youth
Choirs start 9/17



Sunday School & Music Ensemble

Registration: Please be sure to register your child for Sunday School and the music ensembles, as the first fall rehearsal is right around the corner, and Sunday school starts Sept. 21! The registration form is available

via the QR code above, on our website, and in-person sign up available on Rally Sunday, Sept. 14. Information regarding children & youth education is available on our website under Children, Youth, and Music Ministries.

Heart-n-Soul is looking for Volunteers! HnS is looking for a variety of volunteers throughout the summer to help out with cooking, prepping, serving, and greeting for their Mobile Cafés. If you are interested in helping out, please visit their website at <https://heartsoulcafe.com/volunteer/>, or you can contact Leola at heartsoulcc@gmail.com.



Covenant of Prayer: Audrey Kloubec, recovering from a broken hip; Beatrice Janaka's husband, James; Brad Schenck, son of Richard Schenck (BD) fighting brain cancer.

Nursery Attendant Job Opening: First Presbyterian Church seeks an additional Nursery Attendant on Sunday mornings from 9:15am to 11:45am to provide safe and nurturing care to our precious children ages 0-4. The duties include playing with the children or directing their play, all while exhibiting patience and love. This is a paid position. **Requirements:** At least 18 years of age or older, experienced in caring for children ages 0-4, must have current CPR training/certification for infants and children, and be willing to submit to background and drug screenings. To apply: Submit a letter addressed to the Personnel Committee in care of the church office describing your interest, along with a short resume highlighting any experience, by **August 25, 2025**. The church wishes to fill the position in early September.

2025 Men's Bible Study Retreat: First Presbyterian's Annual Men's Bible Study Retreat is scheduled for Friday evening, Sept. 26, and Saturday, Sept. 27. The retreat will be held at the Country Inn & Suites in Detroit Lakes and is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow men at First Presbyterian and learn about God's message for men.

A block of hotel rooms is being held for participants until August 26th. You can make your hotel reservation by calling Country Inn & Suites at 218-847-2000. When making your reservation, let them know that you are with the First Presbyterian Fargo group. If you'd like to split the cost of a room (\$146/night), please contact Dick Blaine at dickandcarolyn@gmail.com or Bruce Maylath at ring4linguist@yahoo.com or 701-866-2626, and we will coordinate with others seeking a roommate.

Presbyterian Women News: On September 9 Pastor Mary Holtey will present the Introduction and Lesson 1 of this year's Presbyterian Women's Bible Study, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ* at 10:00am in the Jennie Roberts Room. All women of the church are invited to attend; coffee and donuts will be served.

Bible Study Leaders: On September 10 Pastor Mary Holtey will present the Bible Study in the office conference room at 10:00am.

Circles: The Circles will meet Sept. 16 in the Jennie Roberts Room: the Naomi/Ruth Circles will meet at 9:30am and the Rachel Circle will meet at 1pm. All women of the church are invited to attend. If you are interested or have any questions, please call Leanne Stanley at (701) 371-3670.

Office Closed: Please note that the office will be closed on September 1st in observance of Labor Day. The office will be open again as usual on Tuesday, September 2, and we will return to our program office hours.

Hearing devices, as well as **large print copies of today's bulletins and 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: 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*

Pamela Andrist-Burns: *Music Ministry Coordinator*

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

Attention!

**Office hours are changing
for the fall!**

Starting after Labor Day,
the church office will be open:

Monday - Thursday;
9:00am - 4:00pm

Thank you!!

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

Sunday, August 24

11:30 Fellowship

Monday, August 25

No Church Events

Tuesday, August 26

No Church Events

Wednesday, August 27

No Church Events

Thursday, August 28

No Church Events

Friday, August 29

No Church Events

Saturday, August 30

No Church Events

Sunday, August 31

10:30 Worship Service (L)

11:30 Fellowship

Please note that the office is closed September 1st.

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

August 17, 2025 Attendance: ???

??? in person

43 households livestreamed

Contribution information will be available after 8/24



Church Information

Summer Office Hours:

M-TH, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org

650 2nd Ave. N.

Fargo, ND 58102

Church Event Parking: If you are frequently at the church during workday hours, please stop by the office for a "church event" parking permit rear view mirror hang tag, or you can call the church office and we'll leave one for you to pick up on Sunday. Occasionally, there is a walk-through done in the parking lot to identify those who should not be parking here. If you do receive a yellow warning ticket, don't panic, call the church office to let us know.