



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 31, 2025

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

His Eye Is on the Sparrow

arr. Lani Smith

Thanks Be To Thee

arr. S. Landon

Jesus Loves Me

arr. W. B. Bradbury

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

arr. Lani Smith

Joni Lordeman, guest organist

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Faithful God, in Jesus you show us a way of humility and hospitality with power to transform our world. Give us the grace to love those things that please you and the courage to live them to your glory. Amen.

✧CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

God invites us to take the lower seat,

We come seeking humility, not honor.

God calls us to open wide our tables,

We welcome the forgotten, the outsider, the poor.

God gathers us not by status or rank,

But by grace, generosity, and love.

Come, let us worship the One who lifts up the lowly,

And calls us to live with open hearts.

❖ **HYMN 829**

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray; take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day be wholly thine!

May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;
as thou hast died for me, O may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide;
bid darkness turn to day; wipe sorrow's tears away;
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me
roll;
blest Savior, then, in love, fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!

❖ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Merciful God, we confess that we have sought to elevate ourselves, placing our desires for honor and recognition above the needs of others. We have chosen the places of privilege, while ignoring the humble and the marginalized. We have built walls of exclusion and failed to open our hearts and tables to those who are different. Forgive us, O God, for thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought. Forgive us for the times we have turned away from those in need, for seeking success rather than service, and for living as if all we have is by our own strength. Teach us to welcome others with the same love and grace you have shown us. Help us to surrender our pride, and to follow the way of Christ—a way of humility, of service, and of self-giving love. We pray in the name of Jesus, who gave everything for the sake of the world. 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

There Is A Balm In Gilead

arr. Mark Hayes

Rusty Bender, voice; Guilherme Montenegro, piano

*We dedicate this beloved song in honor of The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey's retirement
at the end of 2025, a hymn that has touched her heart throughout her ministry.*

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 112, pp. 551

Luke 14:1, 7-14, pp. 951

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

SERMON

U Ought to Know

Elder Corday Goddard

✠HYMN 754

Help Us Accept Each Other

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted, and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them, or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness, and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance, for justice and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us; make us one!

Sacrament of Baptism

PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD

Julia Youning Blaufuss, child of Jeffrey Charles and Hong Zhao Blaufuss;

Grandparents: Mark Charles & Elaine Kammeyer Blaufuss, Qunzhi & Jinzhi Zhao.

Corday Goddard, presiding elder

✠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.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

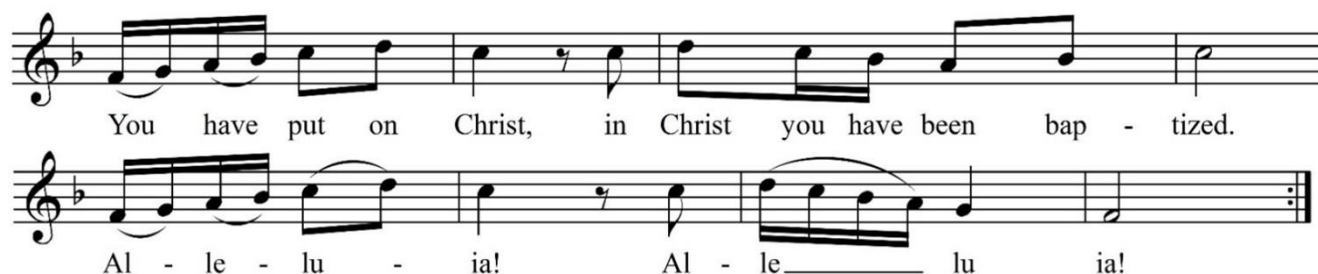
BAPTISM

WELCOME

...Let us welcome the newly baptized.

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ.

BAPTISMAL RESPONSE 491 *You Have Put On Christ*



PASTORAL PRAYER – *Please see the attached insert.*

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

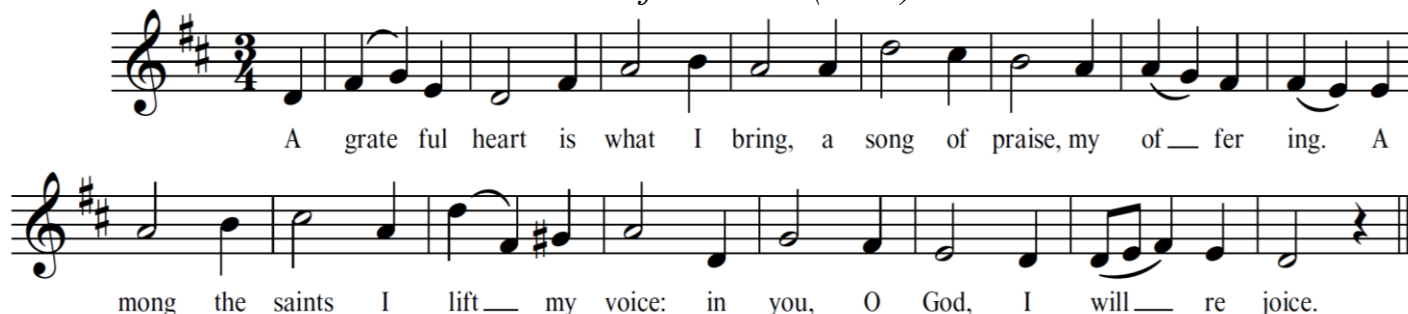
To God Be the Glory

arr. Mark Hayes

Rusty Bender, voice; Guilherme Montenegro, piano

❖RESPONSE 652

A Grateful Heart (vs. 1)



✧PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

✧HYMN 307

God of Grace and God of Glory

God of grace and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power;
crown thine ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.

Cure thy children's warring madness; bend our pride to thy control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore.
Let the gift of thy salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore,
serving thee whom we adore.

✧BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Prelude and Fugue in C major, BWV 553

J.S. Bach

Joni Lordeman, guest organist

Thank you to Thomas and Fred Hudson on livestream and soundboard, Corday Goddard for leading us in worship, and our Welcome Team: Tom Dawson, Virginia Stern, Gayla McGoldrick, and our ushers for taking such good care of us this morning.

A special thank you to our musicians: Joni Lordeman, Rusty Bender, and Guilherme Montenegro.

A litany and prayer after the Minneapolis shooting

For the children killed and the children wounded, for parents, families and all who grieve —
Lord, have mercy.

For the people of Minneapolis, shaken and afraid —
Christ, have mercy.

For healers, helpers and all who keep vigil —
Lord, have mercy.

For our nation, trapped in the epidemic of gun violence —
Christ, deliver us.

For courage to pursue the things that make for peace —
Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Holy Savior, Prince of Peace, you wept at a tomb and gathered children in your arms.

We believe you are weeping now —
weeping with parents whose arms are empty,
with siblings who cannot comprehend absence,
with our Catholic neighbors numb with shock.

Hold the dead in your mercy.
Hold the wounded in your healing.
Hold the terrified in your tenderness.

Forgive us, God, for our numbness, our quick forgetting, our resignation to violence as “just the way things are.”

Deliver us from our excuses, that we may choose the labor of peace:
to protect children, to confront powers profiting from weapons and fear,
to build a more just society where all your children can flourish.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

[Teri McDowell Ott](#)

Teri McDowell Ott is the editor and publisher of *Presbyterian Outlook* .

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF FARGO



Sunday Worship

August 31, 2025

2025 Children's Ministry: Please prayerfully consider your role in Sunday School this year. Are you ready to be a caring adult leader in a classroom? When you volunteer to teach on Sundays, you are giving more than a 45-minute Bible lesson, you are literally showing our children how to care for others and what it truly means to share your time and talents. Leading in a classroom can have lasting impact on your faith as well. Kids have an amazing way of showing us a new view on the world and community around us. No experience required, please reach out to Carrie Lawrence with any questions. If you are unable to accept the call to lead, please watch for any donation needs this year, special event volunteering or regularly pray for the children and families of our congregation.

Parents: Sunday School begins Sept 21st. Please register children using the QR code and be a part of the fun this year! Sunday School is an age-appropriate active experience on Sunday mornings where kids are welcomed and accepted, and where they learn and experience that God's love is for them.



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.

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.

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.

You can make your hotel reservation by calling Country Inn & Suites at 218-847-2000. If you'd like to split the cost of a room (\$146/night), please contact Dick Blaine or Bruce Maylath, and we will coordinate with others seeking a roommate. The retreat will again be led by Dr. Stephen Reed, former chair of the Religion & Philosophy Department at the University of Jamestown. After spending last fall at Norway's University of Agder, he has offered to share with us some of the findings from his career-long research into the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Presbyterian Women News: On September 9 Pastor Mary Holtey will present the Introduction 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.

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.

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.

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!

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.

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 Fiebigler: *Facilities Manager*

Drew Brovold: *Custodian*

Staff emails are: (first initial and last name of person)
@firstpresfargo.org

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. The church wishes to fill the position in early September.

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

Sunday, August 31

11:30 Fellowship

Monday, September 1

Office Closed

Tuesday, September 2

12:15 S&E Meeting (H)

5:30 Mission Committee Meeting

5:30 Worship Committee Meeting (H)

5:30 Building & Grounds Committee Meeting

5:30 EduCon Committee Meeting

5:30 Personnel Committee Meeting (H)

6:30 Stewardship Committee Meeting (H)

Wednesday, September 3

7:30 First Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 4

6:30 Taizé Evening Prayer

Friday, September 5

No Church Events

Saturday, September 6

No Church Events

Sunday, September 7

10:30 Worship Service, Communion (L)

11:30 Fellowship

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: 116
73 in person

43 households livestreamed
Contributions received: \$3,713.40

August 24, 2025 Attendance: 118
87 in person

31 households livestreamed
Contributions received: \$9,946.00



Church Information

Office Hours:
M-TH, 9:00 am-4:00 pm
Phone: 701-293-6311
www.firstpresfargo.org
650 2nd Ave. N.
Fargo, ND 58102