



Love for the Generations

DECEMBER 18, 2022 | FOURTH SUNDAY ADVENT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FARGO, ND

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of Elizabeth and Mary, you visited your servants with news of the world's redemption in the coming of the Savior. Make our hearts leap with joy, and fill our mouths with songs of praise, that we may announce glad tidings of peace, and welcome the Christ in our midst. Amen.

PRELUDE

Three Variants on "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"
Sally Harmon, organist

arrs. Manz

WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

INTROIT

Away in a Manger
K-2 Choir; Erin Torpey, director; Sally Harmon, piano

arr. Hayes

OPENING WORDS

Room
Prayer by Rev. Sarah Speed,
A Sanctified Art LLC, sanctifiedart.org

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

*LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Peter, Gena, Ella and Nora Blaine
and Dick Blaine (Peter's dad)

*CAROL 104

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you a-right?
Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,
to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me;
your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.

O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace
in love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.

In patient expectation we live for that great day
when your renewed creation your glory shall display.

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

It only takes a split second to form an opinion about someone. A prayer of confession is an opportunity to slow down, breathe, reflect on the decisions we've made the past week and ask for God's mercy for the ways our quick impressions have hurt others. With the extra time we take, we give God a chance to fill in and change us. So with that confidence, let us go to God in prayer:

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of mercy, a million times a day we have the opportunity to be gracious, to assume the best in others, to give the benefit of the doubt. A million times a day we could choose the better way, but so often we don't. Fear and greed kick in. Assumptions and insecurities take the wheel. Comparison and critique lead the charge. Forgive us for forgetting that we are descendants of Joseph. Forgive us for forgetting that grace and mercy are in our blood. Forgive us for forgetting that all belong to you. Give us the courage to love even bigger than before, and the wisdom to choose a better way. Amen.

***DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Family of Faith, hear this good news: We who have chosen wrong, are given a second chance. We who have lost our way, are welcomed into community. We who feel alone, are seen, held, and known. This is the good news of the gospel. No matter how many times we choose wrong or lose our way, God continues to be a God of second chances, community, and love. Thanks be to God! Amen.

***RESPONSE 88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (verse 7)

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Hurry Shepherds

Govenor

3-6 Choir; Pam Burns, director; Virginia Stern, piano

Leah Erpelding and Will Peterson, hand chimes

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Penny Andrist

The Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Bruce Maylath, Reader

Holy God, scripture tells us that you came to Joseph through an angel—loud and clear, impossible to miss. Scripture also tells us that Joseph listened. He rearranged his life to follow your invitation. God, we long for that—all of that. We long to hear your voice—loud and clear, impossible to miss. We long for invitations to something more, something deeper. And we long to be like Joseph and find the courage to follow. So clean out our ears. Brush the dust off our hearts. Trace us back to our roots—back to Joseph—who heard and followed. With gratitude we listen. Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

SECOND READING

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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

SERMON

Inheritance

Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

***CAROL 110**

Love Has Come

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers. Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

***PROFESSION OF FAITH**

The Confession of 1967
The Love of God

God has created people in a personal relation with God's self that they may respond to the love of the Creator. God has created people and given them a life which proceeds from birth to death in a succession of generations and in a wide complex of social relations. God has endowed humankind with capacities to make the world serve their needs and to enjoy its good things. Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage. People are free to seek their lives within the purpose of God: to develop and protect the resources of nature for the common welfare, to work for justice and peace in society, and in other ways to use their creative powers for the fulfillment of human life.

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



GIVE

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

OFFERING

DID YOU KNOW? If you are 72 or over you generally must withdraw an amount from your retirement accounts every year (the required minimum distribution). This amount can be paid directly to a charity (like the church). Amounts distributed this way count towards the minimum distribution and are excluded from your taxable income. Contact the church for more details.

OFFERTORY*Gabriel*

Poyzer

Sanctuary Choir & 7-12 Choir; Bryan Poyzer, director

RESPONSE 95Prepare the Way of the Lord*

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre- pare the way of the Lord, and
all peo - ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION*Bearing the Word into the World*****CAROL 106***Prepare the Way, O Zion*

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!

Let every hill and valley a level way appear.

Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.

O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.

His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.

Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.

O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.

All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing.

O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

BENEDICTION*POSTLUDE***Love Has Come*

arr. Eggert



Have you noticed the 4 trees in the Gathering Space?

These are mission trees to highlight 4 of our mission projects. This year we have the Food Tree, collecting nonperishable food and diapers for the Emergency Food Pantry; the Chogoria Tree, raising money for food during Kenya's continued drought; the Mitten Tree, collecting mittens, hats, scarves, gloves and warm socks for area shelters; and new this year, the Vets Tree, gathering needed food items to make food bags for homeless vets. You may wish to compile the complete list on your own, or bring just a few items and the youth will compile the bag. There are envelopes for each of these trees if you wish to make a financial contribution. Members of the Mission Committee are at the trees to assist you!

2022 Year End Giving: Please have all contributions intended for the 2022 giving year turned in to the church office by Tuesday, January 3rd. The church office will be open from 9:00AM through 3:00PM 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 2023 giving record. If you would like to know the balance of your 2022 pledge, email Jan Lundgren at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.org.

Christmas Joy Offering: 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.

Emergency Relief Fund: The Board of Deacons' Emergency Relief Fund is used to help members and friends of the church in emergency situations, including rent, utilities, car repairs, food, and medical expenses. Again this year, all loose offering on Christmas Eve, not otherwise dedicated, will be given to this Fund. Or, you may choose to give online through the giving portal found on the church website.

Covenant Of Prayer: Jennifer; Hannah; David; those without shelter who have died this past year; our sister congregation in Chogoria, Kenya; and the people of Ukraine.

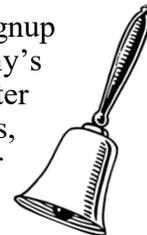
Remembering Our Soldiers In Prayer: Lt. Col. Dan Sundberg will return from Iraq by December 20th! If you have a loved one in the military, please let Pastor Mary know and we'll include his/her name.



Carols by Candlelight: Tonight, December 18th at 6:30pm, join us for this year's Carols by Candlelight Service. The theme is *O Come, Let Us Adore Him* and will feature our church's vocal and instrumental ensembles plus congregational carol-singing and candle lighting in a celebration of word and seasonal music. Christmas treats will be served after the service. This service will also be livestreamed.

Serving at Micah's Mission continues: Thank you to those who have been preparing and serving meals at Micah's Mission (part of Churches United for the Homeless). Our commitment continues every second Thursday of the month. A sign up sheet is on the Volunteer Opportunities Board if you're wishing to help for January 12 and February 9. We need 4 meal preparers from 3-5pm and 4 servers from 5-7pm. Consider forming a team, or being part of a team. See Pastor Mary if this is for you! Come and be a part of this longstanding partnership.

Red Kettle Campaign – Bell Ringing: Signup sheets to ring the bell for the Salvation Army's feeding programs will be in the foyer after worship today. All locations are indoors, through the holiday season. Contact Ginger Deitz with questions, deitzv@gmail.com.



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 8:45** 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

Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood-*Head of Staff, Pastor*
Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey-*Associate Pastor*
Rev. Daniel Billings-*Parish Associate*
Sally Harmon-*Music Coordinator & Organist*
Bryan Poyzer-*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 18

11:30 Fellowship

6:30 Carols by Candlelight (L)

Monday, December 19

12:00 Messenger Deadline

Tuesday, December 20

10:30 Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 21

5:30 St. Andrews Brass

6:30 Westminster Ringers

7:00 Youth Group

7:30 Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, December 22

No Church Events

Friday, December 23

No Church Events

Saturday, December 24

5:00 Christmas Eve Service (L)

7:00 Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 25

10:30 Christmas Day Worship (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

December 11 Attendance: 197

166 in person;

31 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$21,530.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

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

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org



Arts & Crafts Donations needed!

Our upcoming "Crafternoon" needs your help to be a success! We are looking for gently-used or leftover craft supplies.

Please contact Carrie Lawrence if you would like to donate!
(701) 361-6162 or
carriel@outlook.com

CHILI COOK OFF

January 22 after worship



If you ordered poinsettias, please check the information below and verify that it is correct.

Any changes should be submitted to Casey in the office by 12:00pm on Dec. 20th.

This insert will be in the Christmas Eve bulletins at both the 5:00pm and 7:00pm services.

Name	Intention
The Ahlin family	In memory of Chester & Myrna Ahlin, L.J. & Virginia Boekelheide
Ed & Marion Anderson	In memory of parents, brothers & sisters
Katie Bigwood	In memory of Mr. Patrick Moore
Tom & Sarah Bigwood	In memory of Robert & Margaret Norman, Nolia & Lawrence Keltner, Edith & Thomas Bigwood
Steve & Gay Blazek	In memory of Jill Blazek
Marlys K. Borkhuis	In memory of parents, Russel & Marjorie Borkhuis, and brother, Roger Borkhuis
Toby & Paula Christensen	To the glory of God
Candice Cox	In memory of Tom & Louise Cox, Armand & Elaine Bauer, Graham Jordan
Kathy Fox Family, Tom & Georgia Dawson	In memory of Bob, Edith, and Chuck Dawson
Steve & Vicki Dawson Family	In memory of Jacob Dawson
Mark and Ruth DeRuyter	In honor of daughters: Laura & Will Porter, Rebecca & Scott Nasson
Partricia, David, Jane Filipi	In memory of Glenn Filipi, John & Anita Borgman, Dan & Gerda Filipi
Nancy Froelich	In memory of Douglas Froelich
Bruce & Lorraine Furness	In honor of our children & grandchildren; In memory of Ross & Peg Robson, Sandy Mathew, Joel & Vivian Broberg, Loran Guenther, Oscar & Jean Lindgren, Edith Dawson, Our parents
Linda Morse Haak & Stephanie Morse Damman	In memory of Stephen I Morse; In honor of Monna Rae Morse
Tim, Linda, and Taaren Haak, Leah & Andrew Beck	In memory of Stephen I Morse, Elmer & Phyllis Haak; In honor of Monna Rae Morse
David & Sally Harmon Family	In memory of Paul Gulbrandson, Do & Tod Gunkelman
Mary & George Haugo	In memory of Bud & Blanche Davenport; In honor of Ward & Irene Davenport
Bobbie Holman	In memory of Mark Holman, Robert Aspelund, Jim Rosendahl, Oliver & Inez Holman
Ted & Barb Kessel	In honor of our family
Richard & Vicki Laraway	In memory of Harry & Jeane Mason, Harold Laraway
Donald Larew	In memory of Andrew & Mildred M. Larew, Rev. P. Hewison Pollock
Autumn Larson	To the glory of God
Gwen Martin	In memory of Phil Martin
Prakash & Jane Mathew	In memory of Sandy Mathew, Ross & Peg Robson

Bruce & AnneMarie Turk Maylath	In memory of Clyde & Carroll Maylath, Frank & Jayne Turk
Jill Post	In memory of Milton Severson and Dr. & Mrs. Richard Post; In honor of Ardis Severson
Georgia Resell & family	In memory of John & Jennifer Resell; In honor of Adolph & Mae Blomquist, John & Elizabeth Resell
David & Candy Shultz	In memory of Ila & Harvey Coon, Jean & Gerry Shultz
Joseph & Leanne Stanley	In memory of our parents, brothers, and sister
Paula, Kathleen, & Kevin Thomas	In memory of Mack Thomas, Robert & Maxine Yates
Debbie & Bob Tight	In memory of Abbie & Bob Peterson, Tom Tight, Marjorie & Fred Tight
Jerri, Bob, Jodi, and Ginny Twete	In memory of Dave Twete
Tom & Sue Van Osdel	In memory of our parents
Connie & Mark Weed	In memory of Ryan & Michael Weed
Jeff & Amy Wilkens	To the glory of God; In memory of our parents & grandparents
Andrew & McKenzie Zuther	In honor of Grandma & Grandpa Joe