



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

Appalachian Christmas Carols

Vincent Persichetti

Down in Yon Forest; The Cherry Tree; The Seven Joys of Mary; Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head;

Jesus Born in Beth'ny; Lulle Lullay; Jesus the Christ is Born

Andrew Froelich & Sally Harmon, piano duet

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Holy God of Love, there is light in our lives because of the abundance of your steadfast love. A love so vast, so deep, so real, that you became one of us. May we live within the power of this love. And may we share its light with a world where too many dwell in darkness. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Wayne Sander & David Hoffman

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

Glory to God in the highest!

And hope to every discouraged heart.

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to every conflicted soul.

Glory to God in the highest!

And joy to every downcast spirit.

Glory to God in the highest!

And love to everyone.

Let us sing praises to our God.

Let us worship God's Holy Name!

❖ **CAROL 143**

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

❖ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Today we are reminded of the shepherds who, on that holy night in Bethlehem, experienced the overwhelming joy of your good news. In the glow of your glory and the chorus of angelic voices, they stood in awe and wonder. Yet, Lord, we confess that we do not always approach you with the same humility and reverence. Forgive us, Lord, when our hearts are distracted by the noise of the world, and we fail to fully grasp the magnitude of your grace. Loving God, allow the joy of your salvation to once again fill our hearts. Help us to approach you and our ministry with humility. Draw us closer to you so we may be transformed by your love. Amen.

❖ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

Run, Shepherds!

Victor C. Johnson

Christmas Choir; Pam Burns, directing; Wanda Wavra, piano

Josh Argall and Kevin Thomas, percussion; Josh Trumbo, bass; Jeff Olson, solo

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Penny Andrist; Catherine Tesch,
clarinet; Benji Trumbo, shepherd

RESPONSE

Rejoice, Rejoice, O Shepherds



Re-joyce, re-joyce, O Shepherds. Do not be filled with fright, but



list-en to the mes - sage de - liv-ered in the night. The



King of Peace, a ba - by, the Sav-ior of the world, is

13



her-ald-ed by ang - els with bril-liant wings un-furled.

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 97, pp. 540

Jean Pladson, reader

Luke 2:8-20, pp. 933

Whirl Story Bible, pg. 182

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

SERMON

The Rev. Sarah M Bigwood

✧ CAROL 113

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

✧ 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.

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 Mitten Tree

Colleen Ford-Dunker

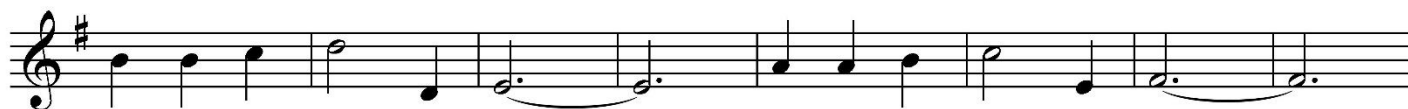
Use the QR code to access the secure giving portal on our website!

OFFERTORY *I Saw Three Ships and The Holly and the Ivy* arr. Deborah Friou

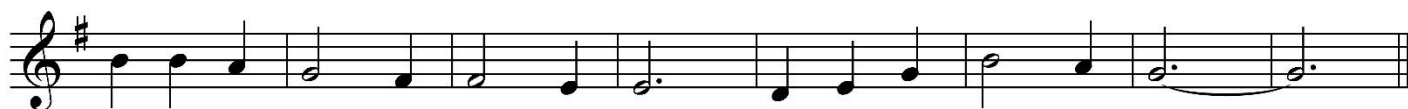
Krista Clusiau, flute; Susan Horton, harp

❖ 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

❖ CAROL 123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King”:
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

❖ BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
Sally Harmon, organ

arr. Wilbur Held



Pillows for the YWCA Our thanks to Presbyterian Women (PW) and all those in the congregation who donated pillows for the women and children at the YWCA this past year. With your help we donated 463 pillows! Residents take their pillows with them when they leave the shelter. You may participate by purchasing new pillows and putting them in the west foyer coat room, or make a financial contribution, clearly marked on a check, or through the giving portal on the church website. Wishing “sweet dreams” to all who receive these pillows.

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.

Member Nametags: Do you have a church nametag? If you have never had one, you may receive one free. If you need to replace a lost nametag, we ask for a donation of \$10 to cover the cost. Order forms can be found both at the Welcome Desk and on our website. The standard nametag will have a magnetic back. If for any reason you would like a nametag with a pin back, please indicate that after your name. Students in 5th grade and above are welcome to order a nametag.

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.

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.

Say Hello: We stress to our desk volunteers during the week, *not to open the door for anyone* unless they are sure that person has reason to be here. Also, they may not recognize you on the monitor. When asked to identify yourself and state why you are at the church, please don’t take offense, as safety is our paramount concern.

FOBs: Friends, please make sure to attach your FOB to your keychain. This ensures that you have it with you when you need to get into the building. This will also help with lost FOBs and the need to replace them. If you have any questions, please contact Rick in the office.



Christmas Eve Service @ 5pm tonight! We invite you to a bright, festive service featuring *A Dove’s Tale: From Ruffled to Rejoicing!* The dove encounters four “ruffled” characters, and each character is musically represented by an instrument in the chamber orchestra. The sanctuary choir interjects verses of a familiar carol that will help us all transition from “ruffled to rejoicing” as we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child.

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 24

11:30 Fellowship

5:00 Christmas Eve Service (L)

Monday, December 25

Office Closed

Tuesday, December 26

Office Closed

Wednesday, December 27

Office Closed

Thursday, December 28

Office Closed

Friday, December 29

No Church Events

Saturday, December 30

No Church Events

Sunday, December 31

10:30 Worship Service (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 17 Attendance: 258

222 in person

36 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$60,235.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

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

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org

Lessons and Carols

December 31st

10:30am

CHILI COOK OFF

January 21 after worship



Sign up on the Volunteer Opportunities Board or by scanning the QR code!

Perfect your chili today!



The poinsettias adorning our Sanctuary today have been given...

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...
Pastor Sarah and Pastor Mary	<i>Anonymous</i>
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