



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.

January 4, 2026
Second Sunday of Christmas ~ Epiphany Sunday

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE *Awake & Prepare the Way: An Epiphany Prelude*
Matthew Pechtl, cello; Erin Torpey, viola; Rusty Bender, piano

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Gracious God, you are the light of the world, shining in the darkness and guiding our steps. Illuminate my heart with your love and open my eyes to your presence in all I see. Help me reflect your light in words and actions, bringing hope, peace, and joy to those around me. May my life bear witness to your glory and grace. In the name of Jesus, the Light of the World, I pray. Amen.

✧ CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

We come to this place, each of us on our own path.

The path may be winding and uncertain, yet we gather here.

The way is not always clear, and the road before us may change.

Still, we trust that God walks with us, leading us home.

Even when the journey feels fragile or unknown, God remains near.

Let us worship Holy God.

✧ **HYMN 744** *Arise, Your Light Is Come!*

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

✧ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

God of changed plans and unexpected paths, the Magi listened when you called them to go home by another way. We confess that when you invite us into something new, we often resist. We cling tightly to familiar roads, fearful of where a different path might lead. Forgive us for holding back when you call us forward. Forgive us for ignoring your quiet invitations and for missing the holy possibilities before us. Guide our steps toward the paths that lead to life, even when they feel unfamiliar. Gratefully we pray, amen.

✧ **RESPONSE 581** *Glory Be to the Father*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, amen.

✧ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 3:1-12

Toby Christensen, reader

Matthew 2:1-12

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

SERMON

The Greater Gifts

Elder Bruce Maylath

✧ **HYMN 150** *As with Gladness Men of Old*

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at thy manger, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.

Sacrament of Communion

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The words spoken by the pastor bless the bread and cup on the table and all the elements that are an extension of this table.

HYMN OF APPROACH 151 *We Three Kings of Orient Are (verses 1+5)*

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:

Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.

O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

COMMUNION MUSIC *Reflections on a Winter Rose* arr. Holst/Praetorius

Matthew Pechtl, violin; Erin Torpey, viola; Rusty Bender, piano

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Responding to the Word



FESTIVAL OF TREES

Jody Hudson

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

OFFERTORY

Rose of Bethlehem

arr. S. DeCesare

Eleanor & Erin Torpey, vocal duet; Rusty Bender, piano

✦ RESPONSE

Christmas Doxology

Glo-ry be to God the Fa-ther, Glo-ry be to Christ the Son. Glo-ry to the Ho-ly Spirit,
Glo-ry to the Three-in-One. Here we of-fer to you glad-ly all the gifts that you im-part,
As we glo - ry in your Pres - ence, gi - ving from a grate-ful heart.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

✦ SENDING HYMN 147 *The First Nowell (vs. 1-3)*

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. **(Refrain)**

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. **(Refrain)**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night
Matthew Pechtl, organ; Rusty Bender, piano

Joseph Parry

Thank you to the Hudson family on livestream and soundboard, Elder Bruce Maylath for leading us in worship and Toby Christensen for assisting in worship, and our Welcome Team: Jim McEvers, Candy Shultz, Jody Hudson, Virginia Stern, Steve & Karen Wonderlich, Dave & Cynthia Baumgardner, Sydney Goddard, Kathryn Byrd, Tom Dawson, and Bruce Maylath for taking such good care of us this morning.

A special thank you to our musicians: Matthew Pechtl, Eleanor & Erin Torpey, and Rusty Bender.



2025 Year End Giving: Please have all contributions intended for the 2025 giving year turned in to the church office by tomorrow, January 5th. The church office will be open from 9:00am—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 the 5th will be recorded on 2026's giving record. If you would like to know the balance of your 2025 pledge, please email Jan Lundgren at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.org

The Church's Monthly newsletter is now available at www.firstpresfargo.org/publications; print copies will be mailed out sometime this coming week. If you do not receive a copy by the 15th, please contact the church office and we will verify your address and send one for you. There will also be extra copies available for folks to take in the kiosk by the Welcome Desk at the church by next Sunday. Thank you for your patience!



SAVE THE DATE!!: Our annual Chili Cook-Off is right around the corner, so practice your recipes and come hungry on Sunday, February 1st! Sign-up sheets and online registration will be open soon, so keep an eye out for more information.

Covenant of Prayer: The family and friends of Joyce Brummond on her passing Dec. 27th, services will be held for Joyce on Tuesday, January 27th, 10 am visitation, followed by an informal memorial service at 11 am at Wright Funeral Home in Moorhead; Family and friends of Norman Backes on his passing Dec. 12th, a Celebration of Life service will be held Saturday, April 18th, 1 pm visitation, followed by the service at 2 pm at Boulger Funeral Home; David Hoffman, recovering from back surgery; Penny Andrist, immunotherapy; Beatrice Janaka's husband, James

You are invited, Sunday, Jan. 18, for lunch and Bingo at Mainline in Downer, MN. The event is scheduled from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM; please note that lunch will be self-pay. Attendees are encouraged to arrange their own meals at the venue during the event. Following the meal we will be playing Bingo for various prizes! We want to extend our gratitude to our friends in Downer, especially Mainline, for supporting the B-D Fish Fry in Oct., 2025.

Snow Camp! Thanks to our Presbytery, each student is eligible for a \$100 scholarship toward the retreat; please contact Director of Church Life, Rusty Bender at rbender@firstpresfargo.org for more information.

Hearing devices 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. Daniel Billings: *Parish Associate*

The Rev. Cathie Bishop: *Parish Associate*

Rusty Bender: *Director of Church Life*

Bryan Poyzer: *Adult Choir Director*

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**

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

Contributions received Dec. 21, 2025: \$34,322.00

December 28, 2025 Attendance: 267

172 in person

95 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$4,045.00



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

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

Sunday, January 4, 2026

11:30 Fellowship

Monday, January 5

10:00 Staff Meeting

Tuesday, January 6

5:30 Mission Committee Meeting

5:30 EduCon Committee Meeting

5:30 Worship Committee Meeting (H)

5:30 Personnel Committee Meeting (H)

6:30 Stewardship Committee Meeting (H)

Wednesday, January 7

5:00 Wednesday Activities Meal

5:30 Building & Grounds Committee Meeting

5:30 Genesis Ringers Rehearsal

6:15 Children & Youth Choir Rehearsals

6:30 Westminster Ringers Rehearsal

7:00 Youth Group

7:30 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 8

12:15 Centering Prayer

Friday, January 9

No Church Events

Saturday, January 10

No Church Events

Sunday, January 11

9:15 Sunday School

*10:30 Ordination & Installation of Officers
Worship Service (L)*

11:30 Fellowship

11:45 Un-Decorating the Sanctuary

5:30 Confirmation Small Group Meetings

Make Stewardship Easy! You can set up the amount you've pledged as a recurring gift to the church. It couldn't be any easier! We offer both an ACH withdrawal from your bank account (no fees!) or Online Giving through our website. Recurring gifts are like the Crock Pot of church giving - "fix it and forget it!". Easy for you and it helps the church to see a steady stream of income through the year. Give it a try! There's an ACH Authorization form on our website under "Forms". Questions? Please contact Jan Lundgren in the church office at jlundgren@firstpresfargo.com.