



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.

September 28, 2025

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

*By Your Blessed Word Obeying
What a Friend We Have in Jesus
Wonderful Words of Life
Elliot Sander, organ*

arr. E. Sander

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

God of wisdom and power, your ways often appear as foolishness to the world, yet in the cross of Christ we see the depth of your love and the strength of your salvation. Open our hearts to trust in your wisdom, to follow where you lead, and to live in the hope of Christ crucified and risen, who is your power at work among us. Through him we pray, Amen.

✧ CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

Truly God is good to the pure in heart,
even when our steps falter and doubts arise.

Though the world may boast of wealth and pride,
we find our refuge in the nearness of God.

Let us draw near, for in God's presence is our strength,
our portion forever, and the promise of faithful love.
Come, let us worship God!



✧ **HYMN 409**

God Is Here! (vs. 1, 2, and 4)

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.

Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;
here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place.

Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt
keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.

Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive:
we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

✧ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

**God of paradox, you turn the wisdom of the world upside down, but we are
slow to follow. We have measured ourselves against false standards and found
ourselves wanting. We have looked for you in the palaces of power and missed
your presence in the cracks and shadows. Forgive us for seeking what cannot
save. Turn us back to your mystery, your mercy, your upside-down kingdom
where the first are last, the lost are found, and the cross is our only boast.**

✧ **RESPONSE 452**

Open the Eyes of My Heart

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;

I want to see you; I want to see you; **(repeat)**

to see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.

Pour out your power and love as we sing "Holy, holy, holy."

Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.

✧ **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GIFT OF MUSIC

I Need Thee Every Hour

arr. C. Nordman

Elliot Sander, piano

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 73:1–28

Claudia Hansen, reader

1 Corinthians 1:18-24

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

SERMON

Foolish

Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

✧ HYMN 835

Just a Closer Walk with Thee

Refrain: Just a closer walk with thee, grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
daily walking close to thee: let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

I am weak, but thou art strong; Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. **(Refrain)**

Through this world of toil and snares, if I falter, Lord who cares?
Who with me my burden shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. **(Refrain)**

When my feeble life is o'er, time for me will be no more;
guide me gently, safely o'er to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore. **(Refrain)**

✧ PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Confession of 1967, 9.17

God has created man in a personal relation with himself that man may respond to the love of the Creator. He has created male and female and given them a life which proceeds from birth to death in a succession of generations and in a wide complex of social relations. He has endowed man with capacities to make the world serve his needs and to enjoy its good things. Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage. Man is free to seek his life 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 his creative powers for the fulfillment of human life.

Background: The Confession of 1967 was the first new confession of faith to be added to the body of creeds we profess as Presbyterians in over three centuries. It was developed around a single passage of Scripture from Second Corinthians: "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself..." (5:19, NRSV). The confession addresses the church's role in the modern world, how the church ought to approach scripture, social problems, discrimination, nationalism, and class conflict. It calls upon Christians to be reconciled to God and to one another.

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 STEWARDSHIP – “*A Community Effort*” Jan Carlsen

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

OFFERTORY

Simple Gifts

arr. C. Moglebust

Westminster Ringers; Jill Post, director

✧ **RESPONSE 647**

Give Thanks

We dedicate this beloved hymn 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.

Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One;
give thanks because we're given Jesus Christ, the Son. **(repeat)**

And now let the weak say, “We are strong”;

let the poor say, “We are rich because of what the Lord has done for us!” **(repeat)**

Give thanks. Give thanks.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

✧ **HYMN 275**

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

We dedicate this beloved hymn 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.

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing.

Our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe.

His craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,

were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he.

Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same, and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,

we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us.

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him.

His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure. One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth.

The Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth.

Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also.

The body they may kill; God's truth abideth still. His kingdom is forever.

✧ **BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

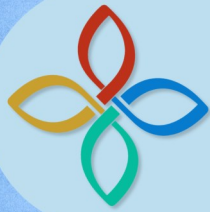
Toccata on “Beecher”
Elliot Sander, organ

arr. E. Sander

Thank you to Thomas and Fred Hudson on livestream and soundboard, Claudia Hansen for assisting in worship, and our Welcome Team: Curt Brickman, David Hoffman, Jan Carlsen, Sydney Goddard, and Troy Schmidt for taking such good care of us this morning.

A special thank you to our musicians: Elliot Sander and the Westminster Ringers directed by Jill Post.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF FARGO

Sunday Worship

September 28, 2025

Emergency Food Pantry: Our time to man the carts at the Emergency Food Pantry will be October 20 through 24. Check your availability to fill in a shift either 9:30-11:30am or 1:00-3:30 and sign up to help. Nancy Lium will have a clipboard during fellowship following worship each Sunday in September. Volunteers must get registered to take a shift beforehand. We hope you can help this important mission.



Holy Buckets will be collecting new or slightly used winter clothing for kids and teens at Bdecan Presbyterian Church. Winter coats, snow-pants, boots and all other gear in all sizes are needed. Put items in the green buckets in the West foyer. Not all winter items are on store shelves yet. If you wish, you may make a financial contribution. Make checks out to First Presbyterian Church and clearly mark your check "Bdecan winterwear," or use the online giving portal under "Other." Items will be delivered in mid-October.

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a form of silent prayer that quiets the mind and focuses attention on the presence and action of the Holy Spirit within.

Thursday afternoons,
12:15-12:50 in the
Jennie Roberts Room

All are welcome.
No experience necessary.



Covenant of Prayer: Colleen and Russell Ford-Dunker as they pilgrimage across northern Spain on the Camino Frances; 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: FPC Fargo is seeking 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 as soon as possible.

Heart
-n- Soul



Community Café

There are many ways to pay!

- Pay the suggested donation
- Pay what you can
- Pay it forward to help a neighbor in need
- If you would like to volunteer in exchange for a meal, talk to Leola!

4:30 to
6:30pm

@ First Presbyterian
Church, Fargo

650 2nd Ave. N.

firstpresfargo.org



May 7, July 2,
Aug. 6, Sept. 10,
and Oct. 8!

Heart-n-Soul's Community Café returns to FPC soon, and there are many other opportunities to participate with this wonderful organization until they visit again on October 8. Check out Heart-n-Soul's Facebook page for dates, times, and locations where you can visit the H-n-S food truck in the FM area.

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. Mary Jo E. Holtey: *Associate Pastor*

The Rev. Daniel Billings: *Parish Associate*

The Rev. Cathie Bishop: *Parish Associate*

Rusty Bender: *Director of Church Life*

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

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.

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

Sunday, September 28

11:30 Fellowship

Monday, September 29

No Church Events

Tuesday, September 30

7:00 Nominating Committee Meeting (Z)

Wednesday, October 1

5:00 Wednesday Activities Meal

5:30 Building & Grounds Committee Meeting

5:30 Genesis Ringers

5:30 St. Andrew's Brass

6:15 Children & Youth Choirs

6:30 Westminster Ringers

7:00 Youth Group

7:30 Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, October 2

12:15 Centering Prayer

5:30 Nurturing Families Class

6:30 Taizé Evening Prayer

Friday, October 3

No Church Events

Saturday, October 4

No Church Events

Sunday, October 5

9:15 Sunday School

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

September 21, 2025 Attendance: 199

162 in person

37 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$15,672.00



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



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

Our Peace & Global Witness
Offering enables the church
to promote the peace of Christ
by addressing systems of injustice
in our own communities
and across the world.

Thank you for
your participation in the
Peace & Global Witness Offering.

IF WE ALL
DO A LITTLE,
IT ADDS UP
TO A LOT!



The Peace & Global Witness Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.



WAYS TO GIVE



Through your
congregation



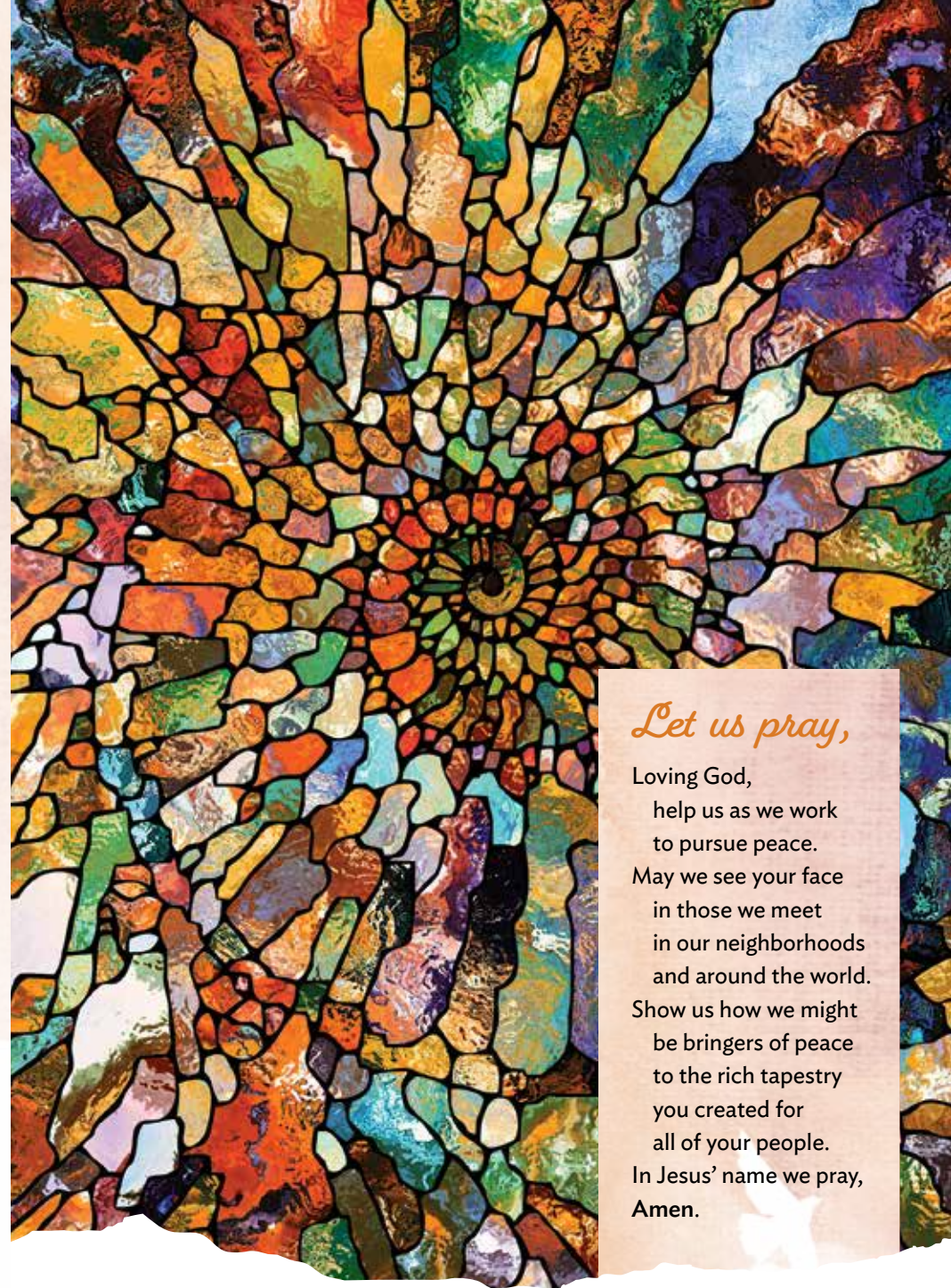
Donate by
credit card online at [pcusa.org/
peace-global](https://pcusa.org/peace-global)



Text PCUSAPEACE
to 41444
or scan this QR code
for more information.



12142-25-283



Let us pray,

Loving God,
help us as we work
to pursue peace.
May we see your face
in those we meet
in our neighborhoods
and around the world.
Show us how we might
be bringers of peace
to the rich tapestry
you created for
all of your people.
In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

A Psalm of Peacemaking

(from *Peacemaking: The Believer's Calling*)

We live in a time of kairos,
when humanity stands on the border of a promised time,
when God's people are summoned
to obedience and faithfulness
to preserve God's creation,
to stand with the poor and oppressed everywhere, and
to stand together as the people of the earth;
when with confession and with humility we repent of
our blindness to the division and war in our own hearts
and in our own land,
our obsession with money and our pursuit of power,
our irrational belief in security through weaponry, and
our worship of secular gods.

We are called

to be obedient to Jesus Christ,
the Prince of Peace,
who loves the whole world and
who invites us to be stewards of the earth and
servants of his people,
to be co-workers in the new Creation.



We are there

LET US BE PEACEMAKERS.

Let us be called the children of God,
speaking boldly with moral conviction
to the nation and to the world,
building, with God's grace,
a new moral order in the world community; and
acting now for world peace,
an enterprise of justice, an outcome of love.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering
brings us together to pursue peace in our
own communities and around the world.

25% of this Offering stays with our congregation to support
peacemaking and reconciliation in our own community.

25% of this Offering goes to our mid-council to join with other
congregations to support peacemaking work in our region.

50% of this Offering supports the work being done by
Presbyterians across the globe

Please give what you can.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

Thank you!