



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 7, 2025

We Gather in Christ

PRELUDE

*Beautiful Savior
My Jesus, I Love Thee
How Deep the Father's Love for Us
Elliot Sander, organ*

arr. Sander

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Potter of our lives, you know us more deeply than we know ourselves. Shape our hearts to choose your way again and again, so that we may live in your love and reflect your grace to all we meet. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

✧ CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood

Come, people of God, and listen for the voice of the Spirit.

We come, listening for God's whisper in the stillness.

God calls through quiet moments and through the cries of the world.

We come, ready to hear and to follow.

God shapes before us the way of life—challenging, grace-filled, and true.

We yield to God's shaping, though the way is not easy.

Let us worship the One whose voice calls us to justice, mercy, and peace.

With open hearts, we lift our praise to God.

✧ **HYMN 410**

God Is Calling through the Whisper

God is calling through the whisper of the Spirit's deepest sighs,
through the thrill of sudden beauties that can catch us by surprise.
Flash of lightning, crash of thunder; hush of stillness, rush of wonder:
God is calling—can you hear? God is calling—can you hear?

God is calling through the voices of our neighbors' urgent prayers,
through their longing for redemption and for rescue from despair.
Place of hurt or face of needing; strident cry or silent pleading:
God is calling—can you hear? God is calling—can you hear?

God is calling through the music of sublime and human arts,
through the hymns of earth and angels, and the carols of our hearts.
Lift of joy and gift of singing; days and nights our praises bringing:
God is calling—and we hear! God is calling—and we hear!

✧ **CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Holy and gracious God, we confess that we do not follow you with our whole hearts. We weigh the cost of discipleship, but cling to comfort, control, and convenience. We treasure what we can hold, measure, and manage, and hesitate to trust in what you freely give. You long to shape us for good, but we resist your hands and cling to what is familiar, safe, and self-serving. Forgive us, O God. Turn our hearts toward you, so that we may let go of lesser things and walk in the way of Christ with courage and joy. 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**

The Word

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18, pp. 566

Jeremiah 18:1-11, pp. 706

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

✧ **HYMN 432**

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord

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.

How clear is our vocation, Lord, when once we heed your call
to live according to your word and daily learn, refreshed, restored,
that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.

But if, forgetful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
if worldly pressures fray the mind and love itself cannot unwind
its tangled skein of care: our inward life repair.

We marvel how your saints became in hindrances more sure:
whose joyful virtues put to shame the casual way we wear your name,
and by our faults obscure your power to cleanse and cure.

In what you give us, Lord, to do, together or alone,
in old routines or ventures new, may we not cease to look to you:
the cross you hung upon, all you endeavored, done.

The Sealing of the Word

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

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.

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 494 *Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts (vs. 1-3)*

Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts, thou fount of life, thou light of all,
from the best bliss that earth imparts we turn, unfilled, to heed thy call.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood; thou savest those that on thee call;
to them that seek thee thou art good, to them that find thee, all in all.

We taste thee, O thou living bread, and long to feast upon thee still;
we drink of thee, the fountainhead, and thirst our souls from thee to fill.

COMMUNION MUSIC *It Is Well with My Soul*

Philip P. Bliss

Matthew Pechtl, violin; Jessica Poyzer, piano

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

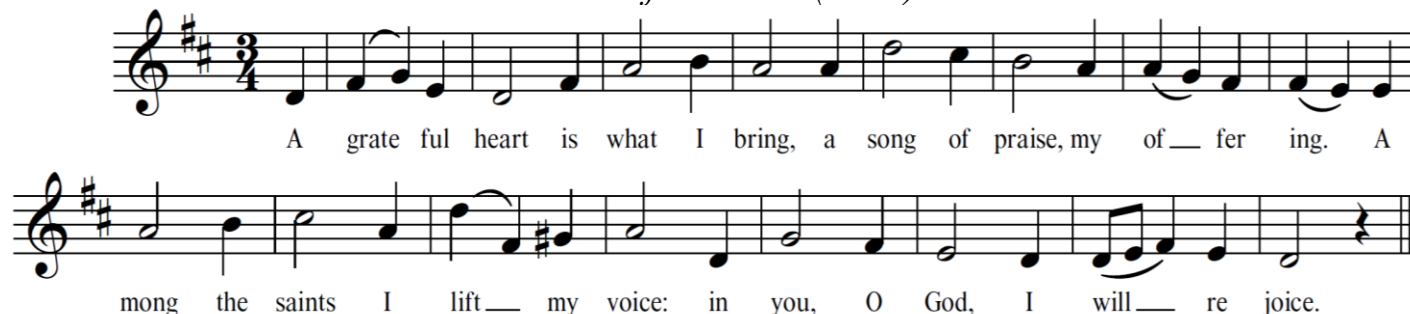
Responding to the Word



OFFERING MESSAGE—*Baker Downer Fish Fry* Sherri Sanderson
Use the QR code to access the secure giving portal on our website!

OFFERTORY *Sonata IV* G.F. Handel
Matthew Pechtl, violin; Jessica Poyzer, piano

❖ **RESPONSE 652** *A Grateful Heart (vs. 1)*



PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

❖ **HYMN 772** *Live into Hope*

Live into hope of captives freed, of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see the year of God's own jubilee!
Live into hope! The blind shall see with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear, a vision of our God brought near.
Live into hope of liberty, the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed.
Live into hope of captives freed from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release to faith and hope and joy and peace.

❖ **BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Wonderful, Wonderful
Elliot Sander, organ

arr. Sander

Thank you to Ally and Josh Trumbo on livestream and soundboard, and our Welcome Team: Curt Brickman, David Hoffman, Sherri Sanderson, Steve Dawson, Toby Christensen & Family, Sherri Stern, Murray Moen, Virginia Stern, and Gayla McGoldrick for taking such good care of us this morning.

A special thank you to our musicians: Elliot Sander, Matthew Pechtl, and Jessica Poyzer.

Find a moment of stillness in your day


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.

*Sponsored by The Pilgrimage
and Presentation Prayer Center*



First Presbyterian Church, Fargo

RALLY DAY!

September 14 at 10:30

- Sloppy Joe, chips, & coleslaw lunch in the Social Hall following worship!
- Produce Exchange

Worship on our outdoor stage!



Rally Day September 14th

PRODUCE EXCHANGE

Bring your extra garden produce to Rally Day

Bring home something different

Brought to you by EduCon



YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us for food, fellowship, and fun!!

COMMUNITY PICNIC

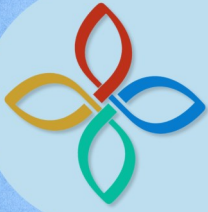
In the Courtyard

Sponsored by the Deacons

9/17
4:00pm

No Cost!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF FARGO



Sunday Worship

September 7, 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.

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.



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.

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 Bedcan 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 the shelves yet. If you wish, you may make a financial contribution. Make checks out to First Presbyterian Church and clearly mark your check "Bdecn winterwear," or use the online giving portal under "Other." Items will be delivered in mid-October. Let's make sure children are warm as they wait for the school bus.

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.

PW Bible Study Leaders: On September 10 Pastor Mary Holtey will lead a discussion on Lesson 1 of this year's Bible Study.

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.

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.

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*

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 7

11:30 Fellowship

Monday, September 8

No Church Events

Tuesday, September 9

10:00 PW Bible Study Introduction

5:30 Board of Deacons Meeting (H)

Wednesday, September 10

10:00 PW Bible Study Leaders — Lesson 1

4:30 Heart-n-Soul Community Café

7:30 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 11

9:30 Town Hall Board Meeting

3:00 Preparing @ Micah's Mission

5:00 Serving @ Micah's Mission

5:30 Nurturing Families Class

Friday, September 12

No Church Events

Saturday, September 13

No Church Events

Sunday, September 14

10:30 Rally Day Worship Service (L)

11:30 Fellowship & Lunch!

11:30 Produce Exchange

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 31, 2025 Attendance: 109

76 in person

33 households livestreamed

Contributions received: \$9,723.00



Church Information

Office Hours:

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

Phone: 701-293-6311

www.firstpresfargo.org

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