



First Presbyterian Church, Fargo & Baker Downer

The Messenger

AUGUST 2025

Lessons from Martha and Mary

Dear First Presbyterian Family,

Recently, I had the opportunity to preach on the story of Mary and Martha in the Gospel of Luke. Each sister embodies an important aspect of our faith journey: Mary, who sits at Jesus' feet to learn, and Martha, who offers hospitality. As we step into an enriching fall season, I invite you to embrace opportunities at First Presbyterian to grow in both wisdom and meaningful action.

On the learning side, we have an exciting lineup of classes, groups, and events this fall. They are designed to nurture your faith, strengthen your community connections, and deepen your understanding of God's word. Whether you're drawn to Bible study, fellowship, or service, there is something for everyone. Take time to explore these opportunities and intentionally grow in faith.

We're also excited to share that our beautiful new Heritage Room is now open. Heartfelt thanks to Don Larew, whose dedication, time, and energy have transformed this space into a rich archive of our congregation's story. It is a remarkable place for reflection and inspiration, and I encourage you to stop by and take it in.

On the hospitality front, a big thank you to our Deacons for organizing the neighborhood picnic on July 22. What a joyful surprise to see such a large turnout from our neighbors. We even had to run for more food! Events like these are beautiful reminders of the community we are called to build.

You may have noticed that more of our vulnerable neighbors are joining us for worship on Sundays. It is heartening to see members introduce themselves and extend an invitation to coffee and treats after the service. This is how we live out our vision: to be a church inspired by Christ's love to preach, teach, heal, and serve.

Together, may we foster a community where everyone is invited, valued, and nurtured in faith.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah
Pastor Sarah

*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**

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

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.

Attention!

**Office hours are changing
for the fall!**

Starting after Labor Day,
the church office will be open:

Monday - Thursday;
9:00am - 4:00pm

Thank you!!

PW Bible Study Introduction

On September 9 Pastor Mary Holtey will present the Introduction and Lesson 1 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.

Fellowship of Frolicking Friendly Females (4F's)

Any single women 55+ are welcome to join this informal social group. Please let Marcia or Elaine know if you will be attending, so that tables can be reserved. Upcoming event:

- Thursday, Aug. 7th at 11:30am — Lunch at Nova Eatery on Broadway, 1 block north of Fargo Theatre.
- Marcia: 701-840-1986, ndmomfoss@gmail.com
Elaine: 701-793-6614, elainerudd1@hotmail.com

Summer Lawn Care

The sign-up sheet for lawn mowing volunteers is up on the Volunteer Opportunity board! We are looking for folks to sign up weekly through September. Typically, courtyard mowing is done toward the end of the week. In dry periods, mowing may not be necessary every week. Questions? Call Rick Fiebiger at (701) 412-6061.

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. It begins with dinner at Zorba's on Detroit Lake around 5:45 p.m. The study session will start around 7:00 p.m. on Friday at the inn. It will continue on Saturday morning (breakfast provided) and end around 3:00 p.m. All men of the church are invited. The retreat is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow men at First Presbyterian and learn about God's message for men.

A block of hotel rooms is being held for retreat participants until August 26th. You can make your hotel reservation by calling Country Inn & Suites at 218-847-2000. When making your reservation, let them know that you are with the First Presbyterian Fargo group. If you'd like to split the cost of a room (\$146/night), please contact Dick Blaine at dickandcarolyn@ymail.com or Bruce Maylath at ring4linguist@yahoo.com or 701-866-2626, 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.

FPC Financial Summary April 2025 — General Fund Only

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Increase/ Decrease</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Income	\$410,789	\$419,269	-\$8,480	\$841,370
Expense	481,263	506,066	-24,803	976,243
Net/Shortfall	-\$70,474	-\$86,797	\$16,323	-\$134,873
Insurance P & R				
Proceeds	11,141.76			
Repairs	-38,672.58			
Net P&R	-27,530.82			
Grand Total (Income-Expenses)	-\$98,005.15			

Serving at Micah's Mission; Volunteers needed for 8/14!!

Our August meal for Micah's Mission is Thursday, August 14. We need 4 people to help prepare the meal (sloppy joes, salad, side vegetables and dessert) from 3-5pm. Please sign up at the Volunteer Opportunities Board in the West Foyer if you're able to help. Thank you for your continued support of Micah's Mission and Churches United for the Homeless!

FPC @ Pride in the Park!

First Presbyterian Church will have a booth again at Pride in the Park this year! This community building event happens on Saturday, August 9, 2025, from 10:00am-2:00pm at the Civic Center in downtown Fargo – 207 4th St. N., Fargo, ND 58102. Pride is a celebration of people coming together in love and friendship, to show how far LGBTQ+ rights have come, and how in some places there's still work to be done. Even if you are not a member of the LGBTQ+ community, it's important to stand in solidarity and show support! If you would like to show your support by volunteering at the booth this year, reach out to Rusty Bender, Director of Church Life at rbender@firstpresfargo.org.



Milestones

We list FPC's births, baptisms, weddings, and deaths, hoping to stay better connected with one another.

Deaths: **Linda Hoag**, May 22

Bob Thompson, June 15

Pat Reynolds, June 27

Richard Emerson, July 9

News from Session – Shine On Update

We have received commitments to the Shine On Campaign for a total of \$2.3M. We have received \$230,000 in actual contributions meaning that we have satisfied the matching requirement for the National Grant. The final list of projects has been reviewed and approved by both the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the National Fund team. It has been updated to reflect the results of our Building Conditions Report (May 2025). If you'd like to see the full list, it's available through the church office.

Session has approved working with Shultz + Associates Architects (S+A) as we move into the project phase of our Shine On campaign. Thanks to the generosity of architect David Shultz, who is donating a portion of his time, we'll receive these professional services at a reduced rate.

S+A will take on the responsibilities of both architect and general contractor, coordinating the bidding process and managing specialized contractors. The Buildings and Grounds Committee and our Building Manager, Rick Fiebiger, will provide direction and oversee the day-to-day activities. Our contract with S+A allows us to select the contractors we use.

Some of the work will take place this winter. We expect about 10 to 12 weeks of scaffolding or related construction equipment to be present, but worship will continue as usual. There may be a few weeks when the organ will be sealed off to protect it from construction dust. We'll adjust our music offerings accordingly.

Thank you for your continued support as we care for and preserve our beautiful church home!

Staffing Changes

As we continue our commitment to balance the church budget by the end of 2025, the Session has decided to eliminate the Music Coordinator position, effective at the end of August. This position was initially created as a temporary role to accommodate Sally Harmon's needs, allowing her to continue her invaluable service to the church and granting us additional time to thoughtfully restructure our staff and resources.

“Spirit of the Game”: Pilgrimage & PPC Course

After an entertaining program in the Jennie Roberts Room at 10 am, have lunch on your own and head over to Newman Outdoor Field on the NDSU campus for a 12:30 pm game between the F-M RedHawks and Gary SouthShore RailCats. Seats are in a shaded area near the concourse. Although weather always is a factor in outdoor activities, the morning program will be held rain or shine. Class size is limited, so please register early. Contact Kit O'Neill at kit.oneill@outlook.com or 701-367-3925.

Sponsored by the Presentation Prayer Center.

Moving forward, all music coordination tasks will be managed by our Church Life Director, Rusty Bender. This transition was always anticipated as part of the Church Life Director's responsibilities when Rusty joined our staff.

We extend a huge thank you to Pam Burns for stepping up at a critical time and doing such a wonderful job supporting our music ministry. Her dedication and contributions have been deeply appreciated.

Additionally, the Session has extended the interim organist position through the end of 2025. This extension will provide us the necessary time to thoughtfully explore our options before making any permanent hires.

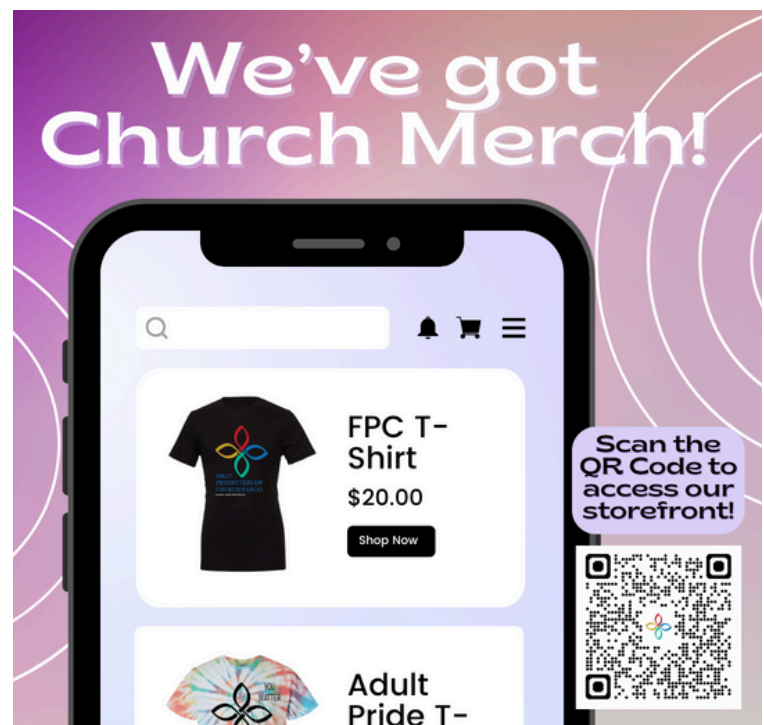
We believe this decision positions our congregation to sustainably pursue staffing arrangements that align with our budget goals and future ministry needs. The Session is actively exploring further opportunities and directions to best support our mission and vision.

Celebrating Our Historic Milestone

Finally, we are excited to share that First Presbyterian Church is now officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places!

Thank you to Rachel Peterson of Hess, Roise and Company who completed our application; the Shine On Steering Committee, whose encouragement helped move the process forward; Rick Fiebiger and Don Larew, who provided key historical records and details, and thank you to everyone in our congregation whose prayers, generosity, and enthusiasm continually make our community vibrant and strong.

*Respectfully,
Your Session*



Join the Song!

Music plays a central role in worship and spiritual life here at First Presbyterian! The music ministry begins with the congregation, a community of faith singing the church's story. Our musical leaders and ensembles are an extension of the congregation's voice, enhancing our worship every week.

Participants in the music ministry have an opportunity to:

- Deepen their faith
- Connect with others
- Practice stewardship by sharing time and talent
- Serve through engagement with the community

You don't have to be a "rock star"! Our ensembles include members of varying ages, abilities, and experience! If you would like more information about participating in the music ministry, please visit our music page at <https://www.firstpresfargo.org/music> or contact Director of Church Life, Rusty Bender, rbender@firstpresfargo.org.

ELLIOT SANDER

SUMMER ORGAN RECITAL

Benefiting the Red River Valley
Chapter of the American Guild of
Organists

Works by
Bach,
Haydn and
Beethoven

Featuring the 3
manual, 59 Rank
Schantz Pipe Organ

Friday, August 15th
7:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church, Fargo,
North Dakota

Elliot Sander Organ Recital

This music-filled evening on Friday, August 15th will serve as a fundraiser benefit for the Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Guest performers Alex Swanson and Sally Harmon will be joining Elliot for the performance. The star of the show is our church's exquisite 59 rank Schantz pipe organ. There will be a reception following the recital; we hope to see you there!

Summer Musicians Schedule

August 17	Erin Torpey, viola Eleanor Torpey, vocalist Elliot Sander, organ & piano
August 24	Curt Brickman & Becky Dura, bagpipes Elliot Sander, organ & piano
August 31	Rusty Bender, vocalist Guilherme Montenegro, piano Joni Lordeman, guest organist



The Adult Choir will have their first rehearsal on September 3rd, Children & Youth choirs will begin alongside Youth Group on the 17th. Registration information coming soon!

NEW YORK KAMMERMUSIKER

FREE
AUGUST 10 @ 7PM

18TH ANNUAL
WINDS OF CHANGE
CONCERT

Livestreamed on our website at
firstpresfargo.org/live-stream



NYK Returns to FPC August 10!

The New York Kammermusiker is a professional double-reed ensemble (oboes, bassoons, English horns) which has traveled extensively throughout the world. Members of the non-profit ensemble will play during worship on Sunday, August 10th! In addition, they will present a free public concert in our Sanctuary that evening at 7:00pm. Sally Harmon will be joining them for their Fargo concerts. Check out their Facebook page for more information on other concerts they will be holding in the area!



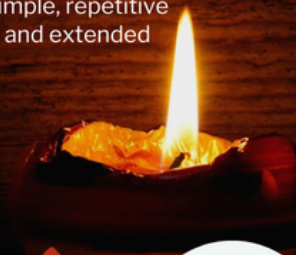


First Presbyterian Church
650 2nd Ave. N.
Fargo, ND 58102
 Phone: (701) 293-6311
www.firstpresfargo.org

Taizé Evening Prayer

Taizé evening prayer is a meditative, candlelit service for all Christian faiths, calling us to dwell deeply on Christ's presence around and within us. The prayer is characterized by simple, repetitive songs, scripture, short readings, and extended periods of prayerful silence.

1st Thursdays @ 6:30PM
 First Presbyterian Church Fargo
 650 2nd Ave N

3rd Tuesdays @ 6:30PM
 Presentation Prayer Center @
 Riverview Place
 5300 12 St. S

Dates to Remember

- August 6** — Heart-n-Soul Community Café
August 6 — Fireside worship @ Baker
August 7 — Taizé Prayer Service
August 9 — Pride in the Park @ the Civic Center
August 10 — NYK in worship, concert in evening
August 14 — Preparing & Serving
 @ Churches United - Micah's Mission
August 15 — Elliot Sander & AGO Organ Recital
August 20 — Fireside worship @ Baker
August 21 — "The Spirit of the Game":
 Pilgrimage Course & Red Hawks Game
August 24 — Baker Worship Service @ Rollag
September 1 — Office Closed
September 3 — First Adult Choir Rehearsal

Date	Elder on Duty	Deacon on Duty	Usher Team	Reader
August 10	Jeff Wilkens	Dianne Connelly	Troy Schmidt	<i>No Reader Needed</i>
August 17	Steve Wonderlich	Wayne Sander	Dianne Connelly	<i>No Reader Needed</i>
August 24	Deb Dawson	Wayne Sander	Marcia Foss	<i>No Reader Needed</i>
August 31	Tom Dawson	Virginia Stern	<i>In Need of Ushers</i>	<i>No Reader Needed</i>

August 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>Activity Key:</i> (L) - Livestreamed (H) - Hybrid (Z) - Zoom Only					1	2
3 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 10:30am - Worship Service, Communion (L) 11:30am - Fellowship 7:00pm - Strikepoint Handbell Choir Concert	4	5 12:15pm - S&E Committee Meeting (H) 5:30pm - Mission Committee Meeting 5:30pm - Worship Committee Meeting (H) 5:30pm - Building & Grounds Committee Meeting 5:30pm - Personnel Committee Meeting (H) 6:30pm - Stewardship Committee Meeting (H)	6 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 4:30pm - Heart-n-Soul Community Café 5:30pm - EduCon Committee Meeting <u>Baker Site:</u> 7:00pm - "S'more to the Story": Fireside Worship & Prayer	7 6:30pm - Taizé Evening Prayer	8	9 10:00am - Pride in the Park @ Civic Center, Downtown Fargo
10 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship 7:00pm - New York Kammermusiker Concert (L)	11	12 5:30pm - Board of Deacons Meeting	13	14 3:00pm - Preparing @ Micah's Mission 5:00pm - Serving @ Micah's Mission	15 7:00pm - Elliot Sander & AGO Organ Recital	16
17 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship	18 6:30pm - Session Meeting (H)	19	20 <u>Baker Site:</u> 5:30pm - Lord's Day Committee Meeting 7:00pm - "S'more to the Story": Fireside Worship & Prayer	21 10:00am - Pilgrimage Program — "The Spirit of the Game: The Spiritual Lessons of Baseball"	22	23
24 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship <u>Baker Site:</u> 9:30am - Worship Service @ Rollag Church	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 <u>Fargo Site:</u> 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship						