



First Presbyterian Church, Fargo & Baker Downer

# *The Messenger*

SEPTEMBER 2025

## Message from Pastor Mary

*Dear First Presbyterian Family,*

I love September! It's my favorite month. The nights are usually cool, and the days are still warm. The air smells like Autumn; the leaves begin to change color. My favorite thing about September, though, is the start of school! (I know it really starts in August, but it feels like September 😊). From Kindergarten through college, every September meant a fresh start, a new beginning. My first September after college was strange. So strange, I took French as a community education class while in Rochester, just so I'd be in school in September!

This is my thirty-third September as your Associate Pastor! I still feel the same way about September. It's a fresh start, a new beginning to the program year; the slate has been wiped clean! Perhaps you'd like to join one of our choirs (K-adult), or learn to play the bells. Maybe now is the time to try one of our many committees, especially those that involve programming – Educon, Worship or Mission. Join a women's circle or men's bible study. Maybe a mission project is right for you – help with Heart-n-Soul or Micah's Mission; Bdecan or Chogoria Mission Teams; Habitat for Humanity or Baker Downer's fish fry; volunteer at the Emergency Food Pantry or Great Plains Food Bank. And parents, now is the time to register your children for Sunday School and youth group. There is always a place for you at First Presbyterian!

As my retirement is fast approaching, I wonder what I'll be doing next September. Perhaps I'll dig out my old French book!

*Love and blessing to each and every one of you,  
Pastor Mary*

## 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!

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 "Bdecan 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.



## Session Summary - August 2025

- Approved two upcoming baptisms.
- Reviewed 10-year budget trends in preparation for fall budgeting process.
- Approved the 2025 Stewardship Campaign, The Power of God.
- Learned about the FM Area Foundation Fund created to support our building and approved including this Fund as an option for giving as part of the external Shine On Campaign.
- Noted an increase in neighborhood visitors on Sunday mornings and expressed gratitude to the Board of Deacons for providing care bags to share with those who may need extra support.

Respectfully,  
Your Session

## 2025 Men's Bible Study Retreat

FPC'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. The study session will start around 7:00pm on Friday and end around 3:00pm on Saturday. All men of the church are invited. The retreat is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow men and learn about God's message for us.

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 updating lists of photos of the Dead Sea Scrolls, he has offered to share with us some of the findings from his career-long research into the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially the 11QPsalms scroll from Qumran. This is the largest scroll of the psalms found at Qumran (one piece about 4 meters long with 2/3 of the scroll preserved + other pieces) and contains mostly Biblical psalms, as well as some additional psalms.

## Serving at Micah's Mission

Our next date for Micah's Mission is Thursday, September 11. We need 1 person to help serve the meal. We also need 3 people to prepare the meal in October (sloppy joes, salad, side vegetables and dessert) from 3-5pm, and two people to help serve. 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!

## Community Picnic 9/17

Mark your calendar – we will be holding a Church & Community Picnic in the evening on Wednesday, September 17th! This meal is open to church members, those attending Wednesday evening activities, and community members. More information coming soon.

## FPC Financial Summary July 2025 — General Fund Only

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Increase/ Decrease	Annual Budget
<b>Income</b>	\$468,644	\$475,220	-\$6,577	\$841,370
<b>Expense</b>	567,951	602,144	-34,193	976,243
<b>Net/Shortfall</b>	-\$99,307	-\$126,923	\$27,617	-\$134,873
<b>Insurance P &amp; R</b>				
Proceeds	11,141.76			
Repairs	-38,672.58			
<b>Net P&amp;R</b>	-27,530.82			
<b>Grand Total</b> (Income-Expenses)	-\$126,837.50			

## 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.

## Presbyterian Women News

**Bible Study Introduction:** On September 9 Pastor Mary Holtey will present the introduction to this year's PW Bible Study, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ* at 9:30am 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.

**PW Circles:** The first lesson of the PW Bible Study is *Mary Magdalene, the Tower*. The morning PW Circles will meet September 16 in the Jennie Roberts Room at 9:30am, and the afternoon Circle will meet at 1:00pm. All women of the church are invited to attend. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Barb Kessel at (701) 261-6215.

## 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



## Invitation to Serve in Children's Ministry

I encourage you to prayerfully consider this invitation to serve as a leader in the spiritual formation of the next generation of our congregation. Each year, we look to parents, teachers, retirees, grandparents, and friends to fill our classrooms with kind and welcoming adults who can be role models to the children participating in our programming.

No matter your time or talents, we will find a place for you. You don't need to be a teacher or a parent to serve—just someone willing to share God's love with our youngest members.

If you have any questions or concerns about this important role in our children's ministry, Carrie Lawrence would be happy to talk with you. Providing our children with caring support, guiding them to discover God's love, and giving them a place of belonging is one of the most rewarding experiences you will ever be offered.

Please consider your role—and say “yes” this year! Please contact Carrie at [clawrence@firstpresfargo.org](mailto:clawrence@firstpresfargo.org) if you are interested in serving in Children's Ministry.



### Looking for Nursery Attendants

We are looking for friendly folks who can provide exceptional care for young children

This is a paid position with many opportunities to do important, welcoming work at First Presbyterian!

**Times include:**

- Sunday mornings
- Wednesday evenings
- Other special events

**Contact Casey!**

[clemier@firstpresfargo.org](mailto:clemier@firstpresfargo.org)

We are 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 in early September.



First Presbyterian Church Fargo

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

**Welcome Back!**

**SEPT 21, 2025**

Sign-Up Here

See you at Rally Day Sept 14th

We're excited to kick off another wonderful year of Sunday School programming beginning September 21st! Children ages 3 (Pre-K) through 5th grade are invited to take part in Sunday morning activities designed just for them. We offer a traditional Sunday School experience with age-based classrooms, caring volunteer teachers, and a Presbyterian curriculum that's both developmentally appropriate and engaging.

Each Sunday begins at 9:15 AM with a large-group welcome featuring songs, announcements, and occasionally a story or video. From there, children head to their classrooms for teacher-led activities and discussions that help them learn about Jesus and the Bible, build a personal relationship with God, and grow in their Christian faith. Sunday School ends at 10:15 AM, just in time for families to attend 10:30 worship together.

Registration is open online, and we'll also have a registration booth available on Rally Day, September 14th. We look forward to seeing your family this fall!



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!**

Join us on the courtyard lawn for Rally Day, September 14, at 10:30 a.m. This service features special messages and music – during and after worship when lunch is served. Learn about fall programming opportunities, including Sunday School, during an open house as part of the festivities!

## Church Life Update

A new season is upon us—and with it, exciting opportunities to learn, serve, worship, and grow together at First Presbyterian Church of Fargo. From Sunday School and Youth Ministries to handbells, choirs, and instrumental ensembles, there are so many ways to engage this fall. Whether you're new or returning, we can't wait to welcome you.

### Fall Kickoff Dates to Remember:

- September 3: Adult Ensemble Rehearsals Begin
- September 14: Rally Sunday Worship in the Courtyard
- September 17: Children & Youth Activities Begin
- September 21: First day of Sunday School

### Worship Arts at FPC

Whether you sing, ring, or play, there's a place for you in our music ministry. We invite you to share your gifts and grow in faith through music!

- **Sanctuary Choir**
- **St. Andrew's Brass**
- **All Church Orchestra**
- **Genesis Ringers** - Beginner Handbell Choir
- **Westminster Ringers** - Advanced Handbell Choir
- **Children & Youth Ensembles**
  - Friendship Choir (K-2)
  - Kids of the Kingdom (3-6)
  - Proclamation Choir (7-12)

We're excited to walk this journey of faith with you and your family. Let's make this fall one of connection, creativity, and joyful worship. Contact our Director of Church Life, Rusty Bender, at [rbender@firstpresfargo.org](mailto:rbender@firstpresfargo.org) with any questions or if you would like to get involved in music ministry.

**RELAUNCH**  
**SUNDAY, SEPT 21**  
**9:00 AM**

### **BAKER DOWNER CHURCH**

We reopen on September 21, 2025 with a special service featuring music by Joni Lordeman and Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood, preaching. There will be fellowship and celebration following the service.

[bakerdownerchurch.org](http://bakerdownerchurch.org)

## Summer Musicians Schedule

<b>Sept. 7</b>	Matthew Pechtl, violin Elliot Sander, organ & piano
<b>Sept. 14</b>	<i>Rally Day Worship</i> Second Avenue Band
<b>Sept. 21</b>	Sanctuary Choir St. Andrew's Brass Elliot Sander, organ & piano
<b>Sept. 28</b>	Second Avenue Singers Westminster Ringers Elliot Sander, organ & piano

## St. Olaf Orchestra @ FPC!

The St. Olaf Orchestra, conducted by Chung Park, will perform at First Presbyterian Church Fargo on Saturday, October 18 at 7:00pm. The St. Olaf Orchestra is a full symphony orchestra rich in international artistry and tradition and known for its enthusiastic and passionate performances. Founded in 1906, the 95-member ensemble has been heralded as one of the finest collegiate orchestras in the country and won the 2013 and 2019 American Prizes in Orchestral Performances among colleges and universities.

The orchestra will perform Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, Valerie Coleman's Seven O'Clock Shout, feature student soloists, and more! Tickets are free and available for pre-reservation online or at 800-363-5487.

### **Dates to Remember**

**September 1** — Office Closed  
**Sept. 3** — Adult Ensemble Rehearsals Begin  
**Sept. 7** — Communion  
**Sept. 10** — Heart-n-Soul Community Café  
**Sept. 11** — Preparing & Serving  
@ Churches United - Micah's Mission  
**Sept. 14** — Rally Day Worship Service  
**Sept. 17** — Children & Youth Activities Begin  
**Sept. 21** — Baker Downer Relaunch Service  
**Sept. 26-27** — Men's Bible Study Retreat

## Phishing Alert!

**The staff of FPC will never send email or text-message solicitations for money or gift cards.**

The most common signs of a phishing or scam attempt are: an unfamiliar tone or greeting, grammar and spelling errors, inconsistencies in email addresses, links, and domain names, suspicious attachments, and threats or a sense of urgency. When in doubt, reach out via a known mode of communication (phone call, verified email, etc.)!





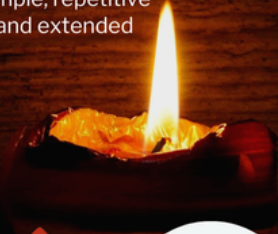


**First Presbyterian Church**  
**650 2nd Ave. N.**  
**Fargo, ND 58102**  
 Phone: (701) 293-6311  
[www.firstpresfargo.org](http://www.firstpresfargo.org)

*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

*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*



Date	Elder on Duty	Deacon on Duty	Usher Team	Reader
<b>Sept. 7</b>	Curt Brickman	David Hoffman	Toby Christensen	<i>No reader needed</i>
<b>Sept. 14</b>	Jim McEvers	Wayne Sander	Rick Herberg	
<b>Sept. 21</b>	Bruce Maylath	Sydney Goddard	Steve Wonderlich	
<b>Sept. 28</b>	Curt Brickman	David Hoffman	Troy Schmidt	

# September 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Activity Key: (L) - Livestreamed (H) - Hybrid (Z) - Zoom Only</p>	<p>1 Office Closed</p>	<p>2 12:15pm - S&amp;E Meeting (H) ** Evening Committee Meetings</p>	<p>3 7:30pm - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4 6:30pm - Taizé Evening Prayer</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7 Fargo Site: 10:30am - Worship Service, Communion (L) 11:30am - Fellowship</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 9:30am - PW Bible Study Introduction 5:30pm - Board of Deacons Meeting (H)</p>	<p>10 10:00am - PW Bible Study Leaders 4:30pm - Heart-n-Soul Community Café 7:30pm - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11 3:00pm - Preparing @ Micah's Mission 5:00pm - Serving @ Micah's Mission</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 Fargo Site: 10:30am - Rally Day Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Rally Day Picnic, Produce Exchange &amp; Fellowship  Baker Site: 11:00am - Lord's Day Committee Meeting</p>	<p>15 6:30pm - Session Meeting (H)</p>	<p>16 9:30am - PW Circles 1:00pm - PW Circle</p>	<p>17 5:00pm - Wednesday Activities Dinner * Wednesday Evening Activities</p>	<p>18 9:00am - Presbytery Leadership POD (H)</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21 Fargo Site: 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship  Baker Site: 9:00am - Relaunch Service</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 Messenger Article Deadline</p>	<p>24 5:00pm - Wednesday Activities Dinner * Wednesday Evening Activities</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 Men's Bible Study Retreat</p>	<p>27  12:00pm - Sausage Fest @ Moorhead First Presbyterian Church</p>
<p>28 Fargo Site: 10:30am - Worship Service (L) 11:30am - Fellowship  Baker Site: 9:00am - Worship Service</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>* <u>Wednesday Evening Activities:</u> 5:30pm - St. Andrew's Brass Rehearsal 5:30pm - Genesis Ringers Rehearsal 6:15pm - Children / Youth Choirs Rehearsals 6:30pm - Westminster Ringers Rehearsal 7:00pm - Youth Group 7:30pm - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>** <u>Evening Committee Meeting Schedule:</u> 5:30pm - Mission Committee Meeting 5:30pm - Worship Committee Meeting (H) 5:30pm - EduCon Committee Meeting 5:30pm - Building &amp; Grounds Committee Meeting 5:30pm - Personnel Committee Meeting (H) 6:30pm - Stewardship Committee Meeting (H)</p>		