



October First Focus

A newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Normal

Edition 10 - October 2026



PASTOR APPRECIATION

We are blessed to have two pastors who lead with integrity and humility and who truly care for us.

In October, we celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month—a time to encourage our church family to express gratitude to Pastor Matt and Pastor Karol for their leadership, commitment, and the many ways they pour their time, prayers, and hearts into this community of faith.

Any expression of gratitude would be a blessing to our pastors. It might be a heartfelt note of thanks, a small treat, or a gift card to a local spot or Amazon.

If you would like some specific ideas, Pastor Karol enjoys Chicken Salad Chick, Chipotle, and shopping at Meijer. Pastor Matt is partial to Ancho and Agave, Pizza Payaa, and Fusion Brew, or anything Star Wars- or Philly sports-related.

-The Personnel Committee



Small Groups Are For Everyone

October is a great time to consider participating in a small group! These unique gatherings are designed to help people connect with others over a shared experience or interest, and all groups are intended to assist in growing in our faith and sharing God's love. If you would like to join or lead a small group, or have questions, contact Pastor Karol, ideally by October 7.



Coffee & Connection Weekly Fellowship Gathering

Coffee & Connection features three group options: open fellowship, guided conversation with discussion questions, and reflective engagement with creative prompts. Each week, you may choose the format that best suits you. In all groups, participation is encouraged but not required. Beverages and baked goods will be available. All adults and high school students are welcome to join us in the Great Hall on Sundays from 9:45-10:45am.



Good Grief Group begins Tuesday, October 6

Our Congregational Care Ministry team is here to accompany you in the journey of grief in a sacred space where you can openly share your feelings without judgment. You may be grieving the death of a loved one or the loss of a career or relationship.



Attending will not eliminate your grief, but it can help you better understand your own experience, receive support from others, and eventually move forward. Held on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays from 6:30-8pm beginning October 6. Limited to 12 participants. No charge to attend, but prior registration is required by Sunday, October 4. Sign up online or contact CCM coordinator Ann Lamkey (217) 253-4406.

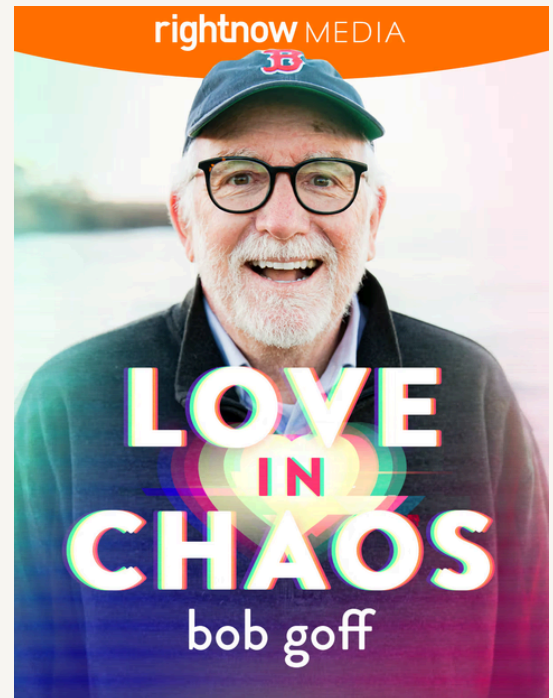


RightNow Media

October Featured Video Study

Love in Chaos: Good News for a Divided Culture

We don't have to look far to see division and chaos. What does it look like to live faithfully in these strange and challenging times? Join bestselling author Bob Goff in this six-session series as he helps us answer these questions. Learn what it looks like to follow Jesus and obey his commands even in a time of chaos, by loving with kindness and respect, even amidst conflict.



RightNow Media login instructions:

To find this and thousands of other video studies for individuals, kids, families, and groups: scan the QR code, text FPCNORM to 49775, or visit app.rightnowmedia.org/join/firstpresnormal (this is also accessible from our website) to log in to your free account. Contact Pastor Karol if you have any questions.

Care & Share Ministry

In October, donations go to
Home Sweet Home Ministries.

Donations can be brought on Sunday
or during office hours during the week.

The Bridge Needs are:

- Coffee Creamer
- Dish Soap
- Tylenol
- Large Gloves
- Kleenex/Tissues
- Bottled Water
- Coffee Filters



The Annual Christmas Gathering

Presented by the

**BLESSINGS WOMEN'S
MINISTRY**



**Saturday, December 5
9-11:30am. Our theme:**

**One Savior—
Many Traditions**



The Annual Christmas Gathering presented by the Blessings Women's Ministry will be Saturday, December 5, 9-11:30am. Our theme is "One Savior-Many Traditions". All women and their friends are invited to attend a joyous, informational, and entertaining morning about Christmas in other parts of the world. There will be a continental breakfast featuring foods from many countries with special attention to vegan and vegetarian diets. Prepare to make a freewill donation to our missionaries, Bob and Kristi Rice, who are in Ghana, in West Africa. Please reserve your place by signing up on the website: firstpresnormal.org.



Thank you to
our wonderful
children & youth
volunteers!



**Faith Stations
Volunteers:**

- Jenny Johnson
- Melissa Walles
- Melissa Moran
- Gail Franklin
- Charity Woodford

THANK YOU
VOLUNTEERS

**Kids of the
Kingdom
Leadership Team:**

- Josh Hoffman
- Melynda Blue

**Middle/High School Sunday
School Teachers:**

- Josh Beal
- Jessica Briggs
- Leslie Walker
- Cody Walker
- Eric Barbour
- Hannah Hogue

**Dream Team
(Youth Group
adult sponsors):**

- Becca Rice
- David White
- Matt Blue
- Sarah Trezise
- Jon Trezise

**Are you ready
to build?**

Join us in either worship service
on October 11th for an important and
special Sunday.





GREEN TEAM NEWS

The Prairie Blessing on August 23 was special. Over 125 people gathered to experience the new prairie and to enjoy lunch and ice cream. Even the tableware was special. The plates, bowls, napkins, spoons and forks were made entirely from plants and were compostable.

We took all the waste from the meal (except the chip bags) to a local drop-off site. From there a commercial composting company took it to their facility where in a few months it becomes rich black humus.

The Green Team tried this greener way of handling waste from a meal as a test, and we are encouraged by the results.



We hope to expand our use of these plant-based products to divert waste from the landfill and to recycle it into a nutrient rich compost for gardens and yards.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Jane	Han	10/2	Sara	Frankowiak	10/10	Kayla	Byrd	10/21
Melissa	Paschold	10/2	Sara	Garrett	10/12	Pat	Johnson	10/22
Julie	Buckles	10/3	Darrin	Hansing	10/12	Rose	Yahnig	10/23
Andy	Kehl	10/3	Mike	Henderson	10/12	Victoria	Jones	10/24
Phil	Garrett	10/4	Megan	Hoepker	10/12	Marilea	White	10/24
Ellie	Henderson	10/4	Sabrina	Smith	10/12	Maddox	Winegar	10/24
Janet	Sutton	10/5	Henry	Wissmiller	10/12	Susan	Barnet	10/25
Dan	Lannin	10/6	Dave	Eaton	10/17	Andrea	Doss	10/25
Gail	Franklin	10/8	Jim	Bouas	10/18	Megan	Landstrom	10/26
Matthew	Mullins	10/8	Larry	Stahl	10/19	Diana	Blair	10/27
Gabi	Toulon	10/8	Kaie	White	10/19	Denver	Brant	10/28
Ann	Beck	10/9	Abby	Briggs	10/20	Morgan	Pauley	10/29
Kelli	Owens	10/9	Louie	Jones	10/20	Steve	Yahnig	10/30