



NEWSLETTER

10AM SERVICE THROUGH SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH

NEW CHURCH MEMBERS 2026 CONFIRMANDS WITH SPONSORS

Charity Woodford and Melynda Blue
Brandon Ott and Jessica Briggs
Louie Jones and Phil Enge
Charlotte Franklin and Poonam McAllister
Taylor Beal and Julia White
Liam Walles and Eric Barbour



THANK YOU SPONSORS!

MAY 10TH WAS A SPECIAL DAY!

2026 CONFIRMANDS &

THEIR KITCHEN NEEDS ARE:

- Bottled Water*
- Small Paper Bowls
- Low-Sugar Cereal
- Disposable Water Cups*
- Ground Beef*
- Ziplock Style Snack Bags*
- Styrofoam Coffee Cups*
- Coffee*
- Paper Towels*

Also needed - non-breakable, microwave-safe, commercial-grade items (neutral colors):

- Silverware
- Reuseable Cups (9oz)
- 10" Dinner Plates
- Small Bowls (for fruit cups)
- Soup Bowls
- Salad Bowls

Donations can be placed in the grocery carts at our entrances on Sunday morning or during the week.



= Urgent Needs

JUNE CARE & SHARE DONATIONS FOR HOME SWEET HOME MINISTRIES

To create your FREE account:

- Scan the QR code or
- Text FPCNORM to 49775 or visit
- app.rightnowmedia.org/join/firstpresnormal (this is also accessible from our website) to log into your **free** account.

Contact Pastor Karol if you have any questions at kschilling@firstpresnormal.org.



rightnow MEDIA

A FREE RESOURCE FOR OUR CHURCH

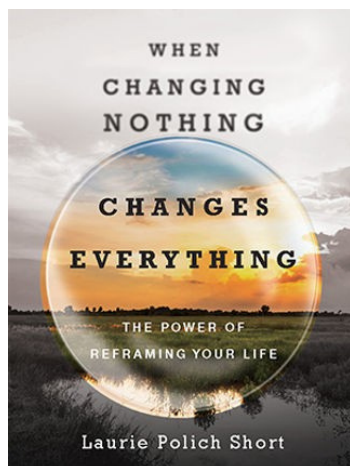
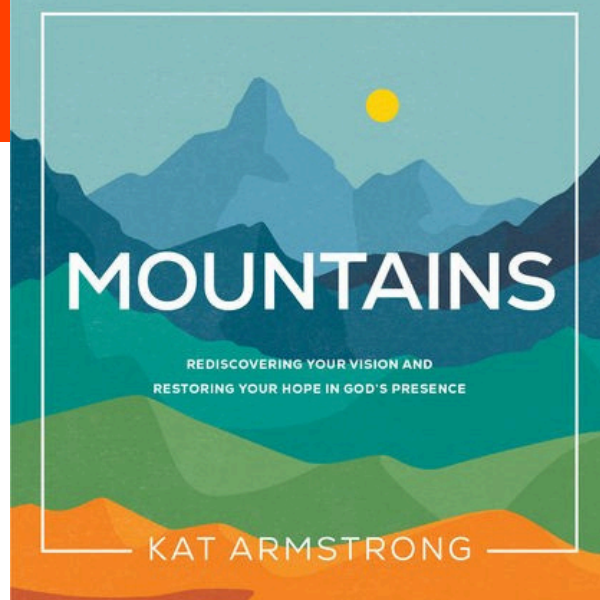
OVER 10,000+ BIBLE STUDY & KIDS' VIDEOS



FAITH-BASED VIDEO STUDIES

Mountains: Rediscovering Your Vision and Restoring Your Hope in God's Presence

Throughout Scripture, mountains are sacred places where heaven meets earth—where God's presence is revealed. In this 5-session study (total 45 minutes), Kat Armstrong invites you to rediscover your identity, rekindle your faith, and renew your hope as you journey through the mountaintops of Scripture—from Eden to the Great Commission. Each mountain tells part of God's story of grace, calling you to draw near, listen closely, and stand secure in divine love.



When Changing Nothing Changes Everything: The Power of Reframing Your Life

We often face circumstances that we cannot change: a job we are forced to keep; a relationship that did not work out; a decision we cannot take back. In this 8-session series (total 67 minutes), Laurie Polich Short reveals how even if we can't change our circumstances, we can still make a change in our life by the way we see it. With the help of 4 "lenses", she shows us how to access God's perspective on our circumstances, which can impact the way we live.

We are part of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The councils at each level of our denomination are the church session, presbytery, synod, and general assembly. We are in the Synod of Lincoln Trails (SOLT), which includes over 500 PC(USA) churches in 8 Presbyteries located in Illinois and Indiana. Learn more at www.lincolntrails.org. Synod of Lincoln Trails Staff are Synod Executive: Sara Dingman; Stated Clerk: Blake Wood; and Wellspring Coaching & Midwest Call Finder Administrator: Christie Snyder.



SYNOD OF
LINCOLN
TRAILS

A NOTE ON BIBLE TRANSLATION

Words That Welcome: A Note on Bible Translation from Your Pastors

The Bible is a living account of God's love and presence. While we affirm and celebrate the timeless and perfect wisdom of our Creator, we also recognize that every generation of faithful people must wrestle with the words of Scripture anew. Every community and individual must ask how these ancient words somehow reach across centuries to speak to us today with clarity, honesty, and grace.

One of the ways we can do that work is by paying careful attention to the translation we use when we read the Bible.

You may have noticed over the past weeks that when we read Scripture aloud in worship or reference a biblical passage in a sermon, we are drawing from a specific translation: the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition, or NRSVUE. We wanted to take a moment - and this month in particular feels like the right moment - to tell you why.

Translation Is an Act of Faithfulness

No translation of the Bible is a perfect, one-to-one rendering of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts. Language is too alive, too contextual, too layered for that. What we can ask of a translation is that it be honest. We can ask that it reflect the most careful and current scholarship available and that it resist the temptation to let cultural bias or theological preference quietly shape the words we receive as Scripture.

The NRSVUE was produced through exactly that kind of rigorous, scholarly effort. It represents the work of an ecumenical team of Bible scholars drawn from a wide range of traditions, committed to both accuracy and accessibility. It incorporates the latest findings in biblical archaeology and textual criticism, and it updates language where earlier English translations had drifted - sometimes subtly, sometimes significantly - from what the original texts mean. For us as your pastors, the credibility of the translation we preach from matters. When we share God's word in worship, we are inviting you to trust that what you are hearing is as close to the source as faithful human scholarship can bring us.

Small Choices Carry Real Weight

In a few specific passages - most notably the small handful of texts that have historically been used in debates about sexual orientation and gender - the NRSVUE reflects a meaningful shift from older translations. This shift isn't a concession to cultural trends. It is, in fact, the opposite: a return to what the original Greek and Hebrew more accurately say, informed by contemporary scholarship that has examined those ancient terms more carefully than previous generations of translators were able to.

A NOTE ON BIBLE TRANSLATION CONTINUED...

Where some older translations used sweeping, modern-sounding language in those passages, the NRSVUE restores language that is more historically precise and more textually grounded. The difference may seem small on the surface, but words carry weight - especially words that have been used to wound people who are beloved by God.

As a congregation that has publicly committed to being fully affirming and inclusive, we believe that this commitment extends to the words of Scripture we speak in worship. We do not take lightly the responsibility of holding those words before you. We want the translation we use to be honest, and we want it to be kind - not by softening the truth of Scripture, but by refusing to allow mistranslation to do harm in its name.

An Invitation, Not a Boundary

We want to be clear: choosing the NRSVUE is not about avoiding Scripture's challenges or hard edges. The Bible is full of passages that unsettle us, convict us, and call us to something larger than ourselves. We believe in sitting with that discomfort. We believe in honest, searching engagement with the whole of Scripture - the parts that comfort and the parts that disturb.

What we are striving for is this: that every person who hears the words of Scripture read in this sanctuary or sits with a passage in any space - in a small group or in a moment of personal need - feels the pull of those words drawing them toward Jesus Christ, not pushing them away. And that, in turn, they feel the pull to love their neighbor more compassionately and more completely. Translation, done faithfully, should serve that purpose.

Why June?

We chose to share this reflection in June because June is Pride Month - a time when many of our LGBTQ+ siblings, friends, and family members carry with them not just celebration but also the memory of harm done in the name of faith. Some of that harm has come from pulpits and from the misuse of Scripture. We cannot undo that history. But we can be intentional, here and now, about the words we choose to read and the witness we choose to offer.

Switching Bible translations may seem like a small thing. In many ways, it is. But we believe that faithfulness is often built from small things - small choices made with care and intention, accumulating over time into something that says: You are welcome here, by us and by the God who made you.

We are glad to be your pastors, and we are grateful to walk with you in this work.

With hope and in faith,
Pastor Matt and Pastor Karol

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Gary	Satchwell	1-Jun
Joni	Painter	1-Jun
Bob	Morris	2-Jun
Roger	Garrett	2-Jun
Karly	McFall	3-Jun
Olivia	Florence	3-Jun
Jenny	Hoffman	3-Jun
Lucy	Lannin	4-Jun
Camren	Litwiller	4-Jun
Caroline	Walles	6-Jun
Karen	Zappa	7-Jun
Cheyenne	Sanchez	9-Jun
Kristi	Kirby	9-Jun
Tyler	Frankowiak	9-Jun
Jeff	Bathe	10-Jun
Rob	Rice	10-Jun
Isaac	Wilcox	11-Jun
Teegan	Hobbs	11-Jun
Lincoln	Lannin	11-Jun
Frank	Miles	13-Jun
Nicholas	Florence	14-Jun
Bruce	Patterson	14-Jun
Tyson	Box	15-Jun
Janelle	Brown	16-Jun
Laken	Kruger	18-Jun
Rebecca	Barbour	20-Jun
Tim	Cobert	20-Jun
Emily	McAllister	21-Jun
Karen	Jones	23-Jun
Gabrielle	Schwalm	23-Jun
Jenna	Winegar	24-Jun
Linda	Sabick	24-Jun
Tyler	Swearingen	24-Jun
Melissa	Walles	24-Jun
Logan	Henderson	26-Jun
Morgan	Brant	26-Jun
Cheryl	Abernathy	26-Jun
Cooper	Flitz	28-Jun
Dalton	Kruger	29-Jun
Tara	Kruger	30-Jun

PEACE GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

Join us Wednesday mornings: 9-11am (8-10am when it's warmer) — tasks include: watering, weeding, transplanting, pruning. No experience is needed; we'll show you. We especially need people to: water pots and new perennials on other days (Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat). If you can take one day a week, we'd be grateful; coverage is available for vacations. Please contact Sara Garrett at saragarrett28@gmail.com if you can help the Peace Gardeners.

WHO ARE YOU THINKING OF?

One of the things that makes First Presbyterian Church of Normal such a special place is not the programs we offer or the sermons we hear. It is the way our church family genuinely cares for one another. That kind of warmth does not happen by accident. It happens because someone notices, someone reaches out, and someone makes another person feel like they truly belong. That is who we are at our best, and it is a value worth living out on purpose.

So here is a simple invitation: Think for a moment about someone you have not seen in the pews lately. Maybe a name or a face just came to mind. If it did, that is not a coincidence. Take a moment this week to text them, call them, or drop them a handwritten note. You do not need to say anything complicated. Just let them know you thought of them, that you have missed seeing them, and that you would love to save them a seat the next time they come on a Sunday morning. That one small act of connection might mean more to them than you will ever know.

-Pastor Matt Wilcox