

AUGUST FIRST FOCUS

PATHWAY SUNDAY

Following Jesus is a journey, not a destination.

No matter where we find ourselves today... whether we are exploring faith for the first time, returning after time away, or have been walking with Jesus for decades, there is always a next step. There is always another invitation to grow, serve, belong, and to become more like Jesus. That conviction is at the heart of what we are calling Pathway Sunday, and I hope you'll make plans to be with us on **Sunday, September 13.**

This year, rather than simply marking the beginning of another ministry season, we want to begin something more intentional. We want to help every child, every student, and every adult discover a pathway for taking the next step in their life of faith.

The day begins with the return of our two-service worship schedule, with our **Traditional Worship Service at 8:30am** and our **Contemporary Worship Service at 11am**. We'll also launch a new sermon series, Disciple Steps, exploring what the accounts of Jesus' first disciples teach us about following Him today.

Between worship services, from **9:45-10:45am**, everyone is invited to gather in the Great Hall for brunch, connection, and a first look at the exciting new Sunday morning opportunities for children, students, and adults that will begin the following week. Outside, our children can enjoy inflatables and games while families and friends connect.

I also really want to encourage you to think about who God might be nudging you to invite. Pathway Sunday is one of those Sundays that naturally opens the door for someone to experience First Pres for the first time. Whether they're looking for a church home, asking questions about faith, or simply curious, this is a wonderful opportunity to say, "Come with me." You never know how God might use a simple invitation to begin a brand-new chapter in someone's story.

My prayer is that September 13 will be more than the start of another church season. I pray it will be the beginning of new friendships, deeper faith, renewed purpose, and fresh opportunities to follow Jesus together. Because wherever we are on the journey, there is always a next step, and we believe God is already preparing the way.

Pastor Matt Wilcox

Save the Date: Knit-Crochet Ministry Celebrates 20 years on 9/20/26!

Everyone who has participated in our ministry no matter how long or how little is invited to attend the Blessing and the Celebration display in the Great Hall at 9:45am. Bring your projects to work on, of course! Fun Facts: 44 people have been involved. 4 founding members are still involved. \$13,700+ collected during our 10 Artisan Sales. Guess how many hats have been made to win a prize! Watch for more information in the September First Focus!

20



August Care & Share Ministry Needs for Home Sweet Home Ministries - New Home Starter Kits



- Brooms
- Dustpans
- Mop & bucket
- Rags or microfiber cloths for cleaning
- Clorox wipes
- Floor cleaner (Fabuloso or Lysol)
- Vacuums
- Towels
- Shower curtains

Care & Share donations can be placed inside the shopping carts available at all entrances. Please bring donations on Sunday morning or during the week, during office hours.



AUGUST Birthdays



Matt Johnson	1-Aug	Betsy Blanks	11-Aug	Hailey Shuck	21-Aug
Ryan Ehredt	1-Aug	Sandra Harmon	12-Aug	Layla Hoffman	22-Aug
Kaeleigh Hinthorn	2-Aug	Matthew Swearingen	13-Aug	Leif Blair	23-Aug
Joan Chapman	3-Aug	Kurt Swearingen	13-Aug	Ken Hoepker	23-Aug
Erin Cheeseman	4-Aug	Ryan Bruning	15-Aug	Mitchell Bailey	23-Aug
Rob Kelley	4-Aug	Brayden Stombaugh	15-Aug	John Anderson	24-Aug
Cheryl Hoepker	6-Aug	Sharon Heitz	16-Aug	Lena Flitz	26-Aug
Dave Seyller	7-Aug	Mylea White	17-Aug	Douglas Schwalm	27-Aug
Judy Ehlers	7-Aug	Angela Brant	17-Aug	Dorothy Lambert	27-Aug
Carol Morris	7-Aug	Kylie Thompson	17-Aug	Carmen Sampson	29-Aug
Charlotte Cooney	7-Aug	Hailey Lanier	18-Aug	Kristin Hanna	29-Aug
Dave Blanks	8-Aug	Lucilia Kennedy	18-Aug	Robert Schwalm	30-Aug
Suzanne Hinthorn	10-Aug	Dave Lemmon	19-Aug	Carter Hoffman	31-Aug
James Turley	10-Aug	Deb Hansing	20-Aug		

Picnic on the Prairie

August 23rd - 11am

- Prairie Blessing
- Sandwich Bar
- Ice Cream Bar
- Educational Activities
- Hosted by our Green Team

The Fellowship Committee and Green Team would like to invite the whole congregation to a picnic, prairie blessing, and a fun outdoor educational event on Sunday, August 23, immediately following the 10am worship service. Events include a sandwich bar, prairie blessing, ice cream bar, and numerous outdoor educational activities.

Fri, Aug. 28

HYMN SING

PRESBYTERY REGIONAL GATHERING

Time 5-6pm

HELD AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2000 E College Avenue | Normal, IL | 61761
Refreshments available at the conclusion

Sign up online to RSVP your hymn requests by August 24th

Join us for a Hymn Sing on Friday, August 28, from 5-6pm! We'll gather in the sanctuary at 5pm for welcome and introductions. Hymns will be selected by participants and we'll close with fellowship and refreshments. Priority will be given to hymn requests submitted [here](#) by Monday, August 24, so we can prepare printed words for hymns not found in our hymnal.

Adult Discipleship: The Wired Word

The Wired Word continues through Sept 6. These discussions explore how a current event or cultural topic relates to Scripture, and how we can apply God's word to our lives. With each week's lesson being independent of the others, feel free to come anytime. Offered weekly at 9am in the library. Sign up here if you'd like to receive an email with the 5-6 page reading and questions prior to Sunday morning!



RIGHTNOW MEDIA

August Featured Video Studies

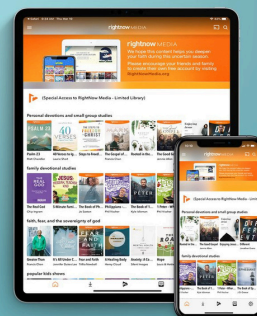
RightNow Media login instructions:

Check out these and thousands of other video studies for individuals, kids, families, and groups:

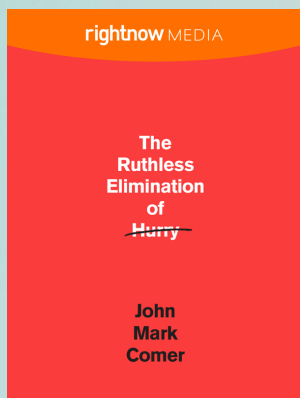
- Scan the QR code
- Text FPCNORM to 49775, or visit
- app.rightnowmedia.org/join/firstpresnormal (this is also accessible from our website) to log in to your free account
- Contact Pastor Karol if you have questions



FREE ACCESS



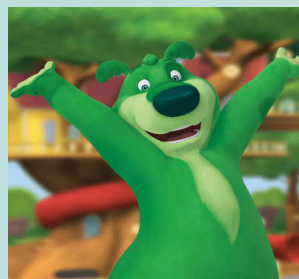
rightnow MEDIA



The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry

(5 videos w/average length of 12 min; great for teens and adults)

Busyness can feel productive, but it is a toxic distraction: it saps our spiritual, physical, and emotional vitality. Living at a frantic pace may seem like our only choice, but God has a better path for us. In this series, John Mark Comer addresses one of the greatest threats to our spiritual lives: hurry. Instead of allowing our calendars and screens to control our lives, Jesus offers us a new rhythm of life, overflowing with grace, peace, and beauty.



Laugh, Love and Learn with BOZ!

(15 Videos w/average length of 14 min; great for preschoolers)

Come along with The Green Bear Next Door as he joins with his friends on neighborhood adventures to discover God's world together!

Playmates Preschool 2026/2027 Staff

Robin Schaefer: Director & Lead teacher of 4/5-year-olds class (Starlight class)

Kelli Merrill: Lead teacher of 2s Teddy Bears/Older 3s Rainbows & Co-Lead 4/5-year-olds class

Amber Meyers: Assistant teacher of 2s Teddy Bear and Rainbow Older 3-year-olds classes

Janel Morgan: Lead teacher of Balloons 3-year-olds class

Jane Reckamp: Assistant teacher of Sunshines 4-year-olds class

Carmen Sampson: Assistant teacher of Balloons 3-year-olds class

Karin Streily: Lead teacher of Sunshines 4-year-olds class



Congratulations to Robin Schaefer, the Director of Playmates Preschool, who is celebrating 20 years with Playmates!



Rummage Sale Important Dates

- Sunday, Aug. 9 at 11am: Planning Meeting
- Sunday, Sept. 27-Thursday, Oct. 1: Donation Drop-Off & Set Up
- Friday, Oct. 2, 4-6pm: Rummage Sale (Day 1)
- Saturday, Oct. 3, 8am-12pm : Rummage Sale (Day 2)



Anyone who has an interest in helping with this year's sale is encouraged to attend the meeting in August. This event requires many volunteers in order to run smoothly. Whether you want to help organize, be a cashier, or help with clean-up, we need you! Please save your grocery bags, especially the larger ones for customers. We ran out last year! Contact Linda Sabick or Dana Sutton with questions. Many hands make light work!

