



A thrill of HOPE

Celebrating the season of Advent together

8:30am Worship Service

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF NORMAL, IL

NOVEMBER 30, 2025

firstpresnormal.org

8:30AM ORDER OF WORSHIP
(When you see the * you are invited to stand)

PRELUDE Savior of the Nations, Come (J.S.Bach) Phil Enge, organ

ADVENT CANDLE SONG

Candles glowing, promise showing the great hope that calms our fear.
Darkness scatters, worry shatters, Christ will always draw us near.
Calms our sighing, hears our crying, helps our trying, love undying –
Christ will always draw us near! Christ will always draw us near!

ADVENT CANDLE LITURGY & LIGHTING Bob Hunt, Carol Schrantz, Marilyn Townley

HYMN #9 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

CALL TO RECONCILIATION Carol Morris

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Carol Morris

It is never easy for us to confess our sins, waiting God. There are the hurts we have caused to our families and friends, which we would like to forget. There are those we believe are impossible to love, and so we don't try. There are people who live on the edge of our society, and we ignore their cries for help. Forgive us, God who comes near to us. When we have lost our way, show us yours. Lead us in humility down the streets of your kingdom. Teach us your truth, so we might be able to keep your Word, revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

SILENT CONFESSION

CHORAL RESPONSE What Hope! An Eden Prophesied Chancel Choir

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS Carol Morris

God remembers not our sins, but the promises made to us. God does not shame us, but lifts us to new life.

Lead us in your hope, O God, and teach us your love. You are the God of our days; we wait for you to come to us. Amen.

***HYMN #23** Gloria in excelsis Deo

SCRIPTURE Jeremiah 33:14-16 Carol Morris
*The word of God for the people of God: **thanks be to God.***

TIME WITH CHILDREN Rev. Elissa Bailey

ANTHEM He Will Come! (P. Liebergen) Chancel Choir; Sarah Jome, flute

SCRIPTURE Luke 21:25-36 Rev. Karol Schilling
*The word of God for the people of God: **thanks be to God.***

MESSAGE Looking for the Fig Tree

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR ADVENT**

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all. **We believe in Jesus the Christ—God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—who emerges as the herald of hope, God’s laughter in the face of despair.** Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish. **We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.** We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by John the Baptizer, it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have passed through the world’s deep sorrow will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God’s desire. **For the coming of that day: on this day, we work and pray: Come, Lord Jesus, Come!**

***HYMN** The Days are Surely Coming (see insert)

COMMUNITY PRAYER *God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.*** Rev. Elissa Bailey

THE LORD’S PRAYER Hymnal pg. 16

MOMENT FOR MISSION Christmas Joy Offering Bob Beerup

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING Carol Morris

OFFERING There Is No Rose (Medieval carol) Phil Enge, organ

***HYMN #592** Doxology

Praise	God	for	gifts	of	hope	and	peace
Praise	God	for	gifts	of	joy	and	love
Praise	God	for	sending	Christ	to	to	dwell

On earth for us – Emmanuel. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Carol Morris

ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Elissa Bailey

***HYMN #2** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

***BLESSING** Rev. Karol Schilling

POSTLUDE Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending Phil Enge, organ

WORSHIP NOTES

Advent Candle Song: Tune: W Żłobie Leży (Polish folk melody) known with “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”; lyrics by Rev. Elana Keppel Levy, 2021. Advent Candle Liturgy and Prayer of Dedication: UMC Discipleship Ministries, 2024. Confession and Assurance: Thom Shuman. Affirmation of Faith: Rev. Nathan Nettleton.

Advent Candle Song (tune of *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*)

Candles glowing, promise showing the great hope that calms our fear.

Darkness scatters, worry shatters, Christ will always draw us near.

Calms our sighing, hears our crying, helps our trying, love undying –

Christ will always draw us near! Christ will always draw us near!

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight. (*Refrain*)

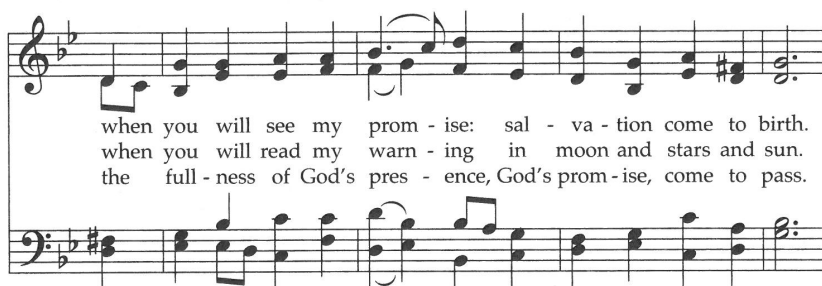
O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace. (*Refrain*)



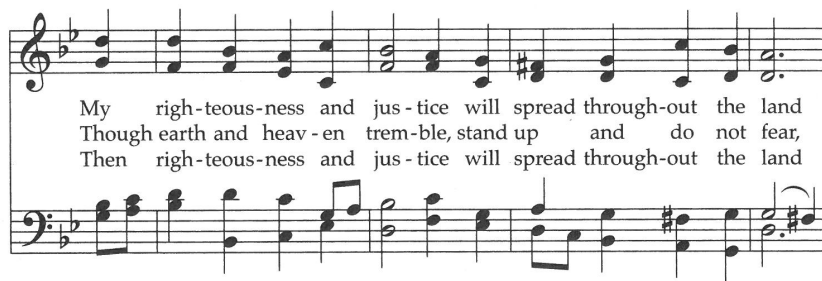
The Days Are Surely Coming 357



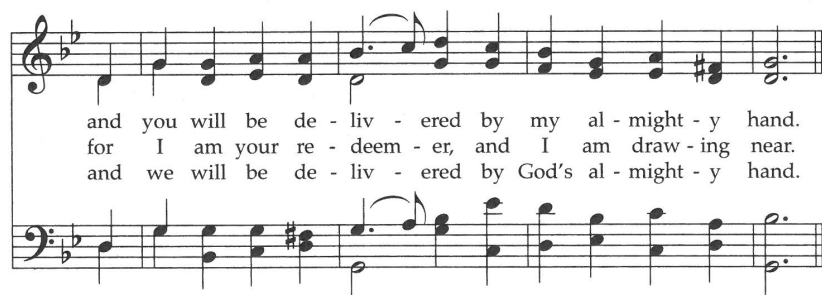
1 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says God to all the earth,
 2 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says Christ, the prom - ised one,
 3 The days are sure - ly com - ing when we will know at last



when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.
 when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.
 the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.



My right - eous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land
 Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,
 Then right - eous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land



and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.
 for I am your re - deem - er, and I am draw - ing near.
 and we will be de - liv - ered by God's al - might - y hand.

This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14–16 and Matthew 24:29–36/Mark 13:24–32/Luke 21:25–36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy
 2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;
 yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -
 Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of
 Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
 fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

Alternate tune: STUTTGART, 1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark your calendars and get plugged in!

PLEDGE CARD REMINDER

Please submit your pledge card for 2026 if you haven't already done so. It is very helpful for Session to have an expectation of funds as they plan for our ministries for 2026. Contact Barb Lemmon, Finance Coordinator, with questions.

TODAY | HOUSEHOLDS OF FAITH VIDEO STUDY

Join us today from 9:45-10:45am in the lounge as we learn and discuss how we can transform our households into more open and engaging places. All are welcome!

TODAY | INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

You are invited to a community-wide Interfaith Thanksgiving Service today at 3pm at the YMCA. This event focuses on the things that unite us, with multiple faith traditions represented. An offering will be collected to support the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign. Refreshments will be served after the service. All are welcome!

NOV. 30 | 10 YEARS OF ADVENT DEVOTIONALS WITH JULIA WHITE

Join our very own Julia White as she shares some themes and excerpts from her 10th annual Advent devotional, "Echoes of Advent." Join us in the lounge at 9:45am. Free copies of the devotional are available at the Welcome Center.

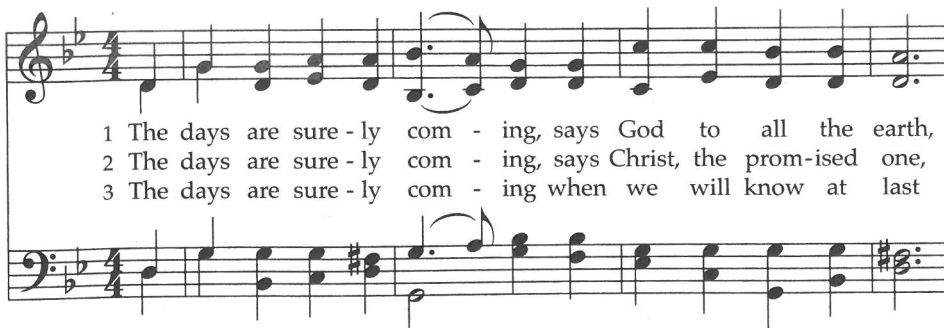
DEC. 5 & 6 | KEMMERER VILLAGE - ADOPT A CHILD'S WISHLIST

All the children's wishlists have been adopted - thank you! For gift delivery, we ask that you place your gifts in an OPEN gift bag WITHOUT tissue paper and attach the child's name to the bag. The drop-off dates are 12/5, 1-2:30pm, and 12/6 from 10am-noon. Contact Jenny Hoffman at (309) 825-7321 with any questions.

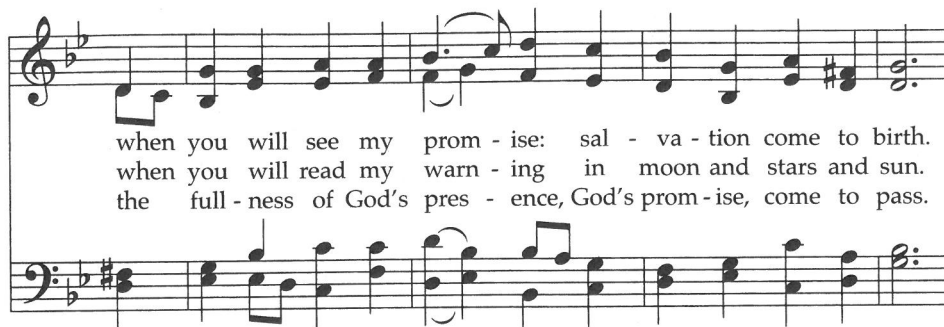
DEC. 6 | BLESSINGS CHRISTMAS GATHERING (CHILDCARE AVAILABLE)

The women's Annual Christmas Gathering will be Saturday, December 6, 9-11:30am. The BLESSINGS actresses will put on a play that will tickle your funny bone as well as your heart. Enjoy Christmas carols, fellowship, a continental breakfast, and a copy of Julia White's Advent devotional. There is no fee to attend, but please consider donating to Bringing Hope Ministry - an outreach for women who are victims of illicit massage parlors. You can RSVP online, or reserve your seat by visiting the sign-up table today.

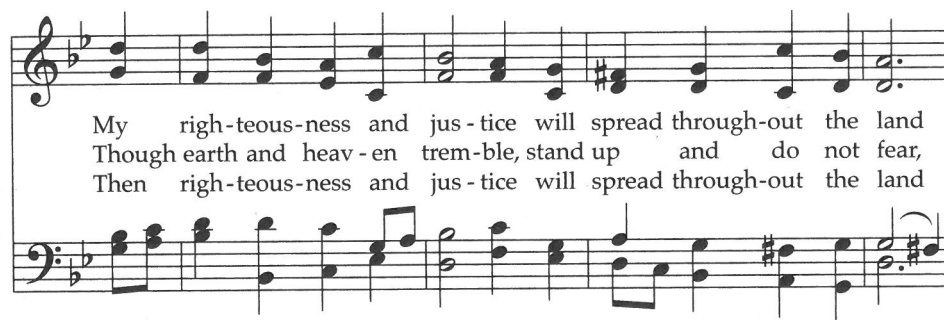
The Days Are Surely Coming David Gambrell, ©2011. Used under Onelicense.net #A-711651



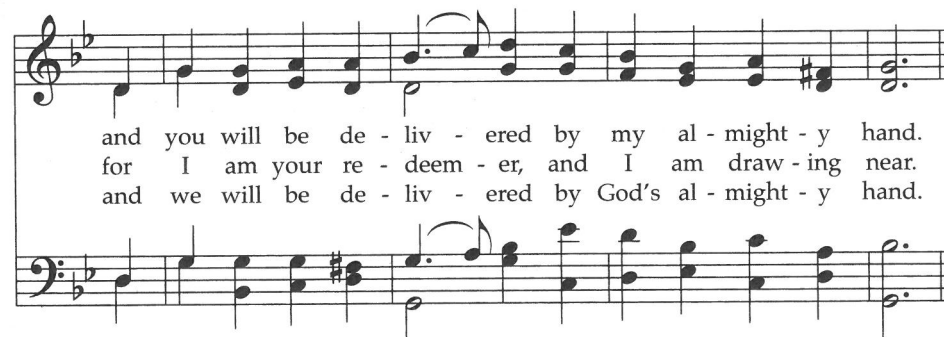
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when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.
when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.
the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.



My righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land
Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,
Then righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land



and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.
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DEC. 7 | ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS 3-WEEK VIDEO SERIES

The Christmas spirit is marked by kindness and generosity—in words, actions, and gifts. But when Christmas is over—it seems like the Christmas spirit goes with it. Why can't this attitude of kindness be part of our lives year-round? And is this really how God meant for us to celebrate Jesus' arrival on earth? What if we had the Christmas spirit all year? In this 3-week video series from Live a Better Story, we'll look at the Christmas story—one marked by generosity—and discover what that means for us. Sign up online by Thursday, December 4.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark you calendars and get plugged in!

DEC. 7 | NOISY OFFERING

Our November Noisy Offering will take place on December 7 to accommodate our guest (and recipient) - Kemmerer Village! They will share a little bit about their mission and ministry to children with our church family that morning in both services! Come with your nickels and dimes and let's bless their important work!

DEC. 7 | ADVENT SERIES BEGINS - A TRIO OF CONCERTS

- Each concert begins at 4pm with a reception to follow in the Great Hall
- Dec. 07: Chicago Recorder Trio: Winter's Charm: Baroque Delights and Seasonal Joy
- Dec. 14: A Trio of Organists: Brian Tanaka, Louie Jones, and Philip Enge
- Dec. 21: Festive Trio of Organ, Vocal, (featuring Kate Tombaugh, mezzosoprano) and congregational carols

DEC. 7 | KIDS OF THE KINGDOM

Children in grades K-5 are welcome to join us for cookie decorating from 2-3pm, as part of our annual Camp Fundraiser happening on December 14! We will gather in the lower fellowship hall to make creative frosting designs and enjoy a sweet treat!

DEC. 9 | FAIRVIEW ANGEL TREE

All the children from our Fairview Angel Tree have been adopted! Thank you! Please place your unwrapped gifts in a large bag with the number tag on it. Gifts are due back to the church no later than Tuesday, December 9th. Thank you!

DEC. 14 | KNIT-CROCHET MINISTRY ARTISAN SALE & SILENT AUCTION

The Knit-Crochet Ministry is hosting its annual Artisan Sale on Sunday, December 14, 8am-12pm in the library. Leading up to this annual event (and to raise money for Home Sweet Home's The Bridge shelter village project), we are going to hold a Silent Auction of three lovely items. You will have an opportunity to bid on a handmade quilt, a full-size afghan, and a stained glass 10" holiday lantern on Nov. 30, Dec. 7 and 14. Items being held for silent auction will be on display and bidding sheets will be available.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sun. Nov. 30	9:30am 9:45am 11am	Coffee Fellowship Adult Discipleship Hour Contemporary Worship Service Sanctuary
Tue Dec. 2	2:45pm	PASS After School Program Great Hall
Wed. Dec. 3	1pm 4:30pm 5:30pm 6:30pm	Bible in a Year Discussion Group Library Worship Band Rehearsal Congregational Care Team Checkin Library Chancel Choir Sanctuary
Thu. Dec. 4	9am 2:45pm 5:15pm 6pm	Book Group Library PASS After School Program Great Hall Serving Meals at Safe Harbor New Women Library
Fri. Dec. 5	11:15am	Worship Band Rehearsal Sanctuary
Sat. Dec. 6	9am	Blessings Christmas Gathering Great Hall

CONTACT OUR CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor - Matt Wilcox (on sabbatical, Oct. 1-Dec. 31)..... mwilcox@firstpresnormal.org
 Associate Pastor, Acting Head of Staff - Karol Schilling..... kschilling@firstpresnormal.org
 Director of Music - Phil Enge penge@firstpresnormal.org
 Director of Family Ministry - Kelli Owens kowens@firstpresnormal.org
 Director of Playmates Preschool - Robin Schaefer rschaefer@firstpresnormal.org
 Childcare Coordinator - Tristan Bishop..... tcb.bishop@gmail.com
 Financial Coordinator - Barb Lemmon blemmon@firstpresnormal.org
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 A/V Technician - Tyler Gatto tgatto@firstpresnormal.org
 Property Manager - John Anderson janderson@firstpresnormal.org

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 info@firstpresnormal.org

INSTAGRAM

 [firstpresnormal.org](https://www.instagram.com/firstpresnormal.org)

SIGN-UPS




Scan the QR code with your phone's camera. When a link pops up, tap it with your finger.

We affirm that all people are children of God and are created in the image of God. Believing this, we welcome all individuals into the life, community, and ministry of First Pres. This includes people of every age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental ability, economic status, political belief, background, and past experience. No one is excluded, marginalized, or held outside the warm welcome of this congregation. You can find our full statement of affirmation & inclusion on our website.