



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORMAL

# WE ARE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

NEW? SEE THE WELCOME CENTER FOR YOUR GIFT!



**01** FEB  
2026



START AT  
**8:30 AM**

2000 E College Ave, in Normal, IL

[www.firstpresnormal.org](http://www.firstpresnormal.org)

*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.*

**FEBRUARY 1, 2026  
8:30AM ORDER OF WORSHIP**

(When you see the \* please stand, if you are able)

## **PRELUDE**      Prelude and Fugue in B-flat Major (attr. J.S. Bach) Louie Jones, organ

## **INTROIT** Bring Forth the Kingdom (M. Haugen) Chancel Choir

## CALL TO WORSHIP (PSALM 100) Aimee Ott

Leader: Let us come to our Lord with joy and praise.

## People: We will worship the Lord with gladness

Leader: Let us come to the Lord with thanksgiving and praise.

**People: We will rejoice in God's faithful and enduring love.**

**\*HYMN For the Fruit of All Creation (see next page for music)**

## **PRAYER OF CONFESION** Aimee Ott

Gracious God, we confess that the soil of our lives is not always ready to receive Your Word. At times we hear the Gospel but allow worry, distraction, or fear to choke out what you are planting within us. We resist the deep work of rooting Your truth in our hearts, settling instead for shallow faith. Forgive us, and by Your Spirit, tend the soil of our lives so that Your Word may take root, grow, and bear fruit. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## SILENT CONFESSION

**CHORAL RESPONSE** In Simple Trust (J.G Whittier) Chancel Choir

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS** Aimee Ott

Leader: We might feel dry and hollow, wondering what God can do with us, but there is a Gardener who brings life.

## **People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

**\*HYMN #579**      Gloria Patri

**SCRIPTURE** Matthew 13:1-9 **Preacher** Aimee Ott

**8:30AM ORDER OF WORSHIP CONTINUED**  
(When you see the \* please stand, if you are able)

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<b>TIME WITH CHILDREN</b>		Ann Lamkey
<b>ANTHEM</b>	Look at the World (J. Rutter)	Chancel Choir
<b>SCRIPTURE</b>	Matthew 13:18-23	Pastor Matt Wilcox
<b>MESSAGE</b>	Object Lessons: Soil Matters	
<b>*HYMN #324</b>	Open My Eyes That I May See	
<b>COMMUNITY PRAYER &amp; THE LORD'S PRAYER</b>		Pastor Karol Schilling
<b>COMMUNION</b>		Pastor Matt Wilcox
<b>INVITATION TO THE OFFERING</b>		Aimee Ott
<b>OFFERING</b>	Fairest Lord Jesus	Handbells; Rose Yahnig, piano
<b>*HYMN #592</b>	Doxology	
<b>*PRAYER OF DEDICATION</b>		Aimee Ott
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>		Pastor Karol Schilling
<b>*HYMN #560</b>	We Plow the Fields and Scatter	
<b>*BLESSING</b>		Pastor Matt Wilcox
<b>POSTLUDE</b>	Adagio for Mechanical Clock (W.A. Mozart)	Phil Enge, organ

**THE FLOWERS ARE GIVEN BY:**  
*E'Lane Tufts, in honor of Gary and E'Lane's 10th anniversary.*  
*Curtis Trout, in loving memory of his sister, Cathryn V. Truitt.*

# SOIL MATTERS

MATTHEW 13:18-23

## The Main Point

*(A quick summary of the sermon.)*

Jesus teaches us that while God generously scatters the seed of the Gospel everywhere, the difference between fruitfulness and barrenness lies in the condition of the soil, our hearts, and lives. We are invited to honestly examine what hardens, distracts, or crowds our hearts, and to trust that, with care and intention, even depleted soil can be restored. When we allow God to tend and reshape us, the Gospel can take root and produce lasting growth and life.

## One Question

*(A single question to carry with you this week.)*

*What kind of soil best describes your life right now, and what might God be inviting you to tend, remove, or open up so the seed of the Gospel can take deeper root and bear fruit?*

## What Now?

*(A clear, simple next step.)*

This week, take one concrete step to tend the soil of your life by removing a distraction or habit that crowds out your attention to God and replace it with a simple, life-giving practice like prayer, reading Scripture, or intentional silence.

# TRADITIONAL WORSHIP *Resource*

## GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, amen.*

## COMMUNITY PRAYER RESPONSE

*God in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

## DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Introit

Bring Forth the Kingdom

Marty Haugen

You are a seed of the word, O people: bring forth the kingdom of God!

Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice, grow in the kingdom of God!

Bring forth the kingdom of mercy, bring forth the kingdom of peace;

Bring forth the kingdom of justice, bring forth the city of God!

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Prayer Response

In Simple Trust

In simple trust like theirs who heard,  
Beside the Syrian sea,  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word  
Rise up and follow Thee.

Music: Frederick Charles Maker, 1887. *Public Domain*

Text: John Greenleaf Whittier, 1872. *Public Domain*

For the Fruit of All Creation

Ar Hyd Y Nos



For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God;  
for the gifts of every nation, thanks be to God;  
for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,  
silent growth while we are sleeping,  
future needs in earth's safe-keeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labour, God's will is done;  
in the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done;  
in our world-wide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,  
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God;  
for the good we all inherit, thanks be to God;  
for the wonders that astound us,  
for the truths that still confound us,  
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 19023-2000 Words © 1970 Hope Publishing Company.

Music: Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958. Arr. ©Oxford University Press. Text and music used with permission under OneLicense.net #A-711651.

Clara H. Scott, 1895

OPEN MY EYES 8.8.9.8 with refrain

Clara H. Scott, 1895



1. O - pen my eyes, that I may see Glimps - es of truth Thou hast for me;
2. O - pen my ears, that I may hear Voic - es of truth Thou send - est clear;
3. O - pen my mouth, and let me bear Glad - ly the warm truth ev - ery - where;



Place in my hands the won - der - ful key That shall un - clasp and set me free.  
 And while the wave notes fall on my ear, Ev - ery - thing false will dis - ap - pear.  
 O - pen my heart, and let me pre - pare Love with Thy chil - dren thus to share.

*Refrain*

HOLY SPIRIT



Si - lent - ly now I wait for Thee, Read - y, my God, Thy will to see;



eyes,  
 O - pen my ears, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!  
 heart,



## THANKSGIVING HYMNS

## 560 We Plow the Fields and Scatter

NYLAND 7.6.7.6 D

Matthias Claudius, 1782

Trans. Jane Montgomery Campbell, 1861; alt.

Finnish folk melody

Adapt. and harm. David Evans, 1927

1. We plow the fields and scat - ter The good seed on the land,  
 2. You on - ly are the Mak - er Of all things near and far;  
 3. We thank You, then, Cre - a - tor, For all things bright and good,

But it is fed and wa - tered By God's al - might - y hand;  
 You paint the way-side flow - er, You light the eve - ning star;  
 The seed-time and the har - vest, Our life, our health, our food;

Music: Adaptation and harmonization from the *Revised Church Hymnary* 1927. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.

THANKSGIVING HYMNS

God sends the snow in win - ter, The warmth to swell the grain,  
The winds and waves o - bey You, By You the birds are fed;  
Ac - cept the gifts we of - fer, For all Your love im - parts,

The breez-es and the sun - shine, And soft, re - fresh-ing rain.  
Much more to us, Your chil - dren, You give our dai - ly bread.  
And what You most would wel - come, Our hum - ble, thank-ful hearts.

$\text{♩} = 46-50$

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mark you calendars and get plugged in!

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### **TODAY | FEBRUARY CARE & SHARE MINISTRY**

February donations will again go to Home Sweet Home Ministries. Thank you for supporting this ongoing donation drive with our local mission partners. For a full list of items you can donate, please look online at [firstpresnormal.org](http://firstpresnormal.org). Please contact Ann Beck with any questions, and thank you to the Deacons for taking the food to their designated locations each month. We appreciate you!

### **TODAY | NICE BOOK & VIDEO STUDY**

God never called us to be nice. In this series, we're exploring a seemingly innocent idol that has crept into our faith and quietly corrupted it, producing bad fruits of cowardice, inauthenticity, shallowness, and more. We are challenged to cultivate a better "tree," using practical steps to reclaim our credibility as followers of Christ to bear better, richer, more life-giving fruits. Join us in the Lounge on Feb. 1 and 15 at 9:45am, and on Feb 8 at 9am.

### **TODAY | BIBLE IN A YEAR SURVEY**

Did you participate in Bible in a Year during 2025? We'd like to hear about your experience! Complete this survey by Sunday, February 8: <https://tinyurl.com/3b7jrr8s>.

### **FEB. 2 | BLESSINGS ROMANS STUDY**

Blessings Women's Ministry is offering a study on the book of Romans. We will meet every Monday evening, 6-7pm, February 2 - May 18. A study guide can be purchased for \$10. Other social events during the winter and spring months will also be planned. All women are welcome to attend. Sign up on the website under "Resources", click "Sign-Ups". Or text/call Irene DenBesten at 309-824-5611.

### **FEB. 5 | NEW WOMEN SMALL GROUP BOOK STUDY**

We will be studying John 1-10. We will read the book, "John for Everyone" by N.T. Wright. Wright offers clear verse-by-verse insights and practical reflections to help readers apply John's message to everyday faith. Our meetings are: 2/5 (Confirmation Room), 2/19 (Library), 3/5 (Library), 3/19 (Lounge), and 4/16 (Library) at 6pm. Contact Barb Lemmon if you have any questions at [barblemmon7755@gmail.com](mailto:barblemmon7755@gmail.com).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark your calendars and get plugged in!

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### FEB. 8 | ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING & ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK

Church members are encouraged to attend the Congregational Meeting. We will have one service at 10am, followed by the Congregational Meeting. Copies of the Annual Report will be available on that Sunday at the Welcome Center. After the meeting, join us for an all-church potluck in the Great Hall. Please bring a dish to share based on the FIRST letter of your LAST name. Drinks will be provided:

- A-D: Dessert | E-L: Main Course | M-Z: Side Dish

### FEB. 8 | BIG GAME PARTY

Everyone is invited to watch the Super Bowl on Sunday, February 8. We will be in the Great Hall with both big screens playing the game. The party will start at 5:15pm with kick-off scheduled for 5:30pm. The church will provide pizza and drinks and we are asking everyone to bring their favorite appetizer to share. You are encouraged to wear your favorite sports team gear! We will also have activities for kids up to 5th grade in the lower level up until half-time. Please RSVP on the website so we can have an accurate count for food!

### FEB. 11 HOPE BAGS FOR CEDAR RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Join us Wednesday, Feb. 11, at either 11am (to unpack food) or 6pm (to fill bags). We will meet in the Great Hall. Please sign up online if you can help. These snack bags are then delivered to Cedar Ridge Elementary School on Thursday morning.



## M A R K Y O U R C A L E N D A R

<b>Sun.</b> Feb. 1	9:30am 9:45am 9:45am 11am 12pm 12:15pm 5:30pm 5:45pm	Coffee Fellowship   Great Hall Hallway Sunday School/Adult Discipleship Hour Elder & Deacon Orientation   Library Contemporary Worship Service   Sanctuary Confirmation Class   Lounge Family Ministry Committee   Library Alpha Small Group   Zoom Youth Group   High School
<b>Mon.</b> Feb. 2	6pm	Blessings Bible Study   Lounge
<b>Tue.</b> Feb. 3	2:45pm 6:30pm	PASS After School Program   Great Hall Handbells Rehearsal   Lounge
<b>Wed.</b> Feb. 4	4:30pm 6:30pm	Worship Band Rehearsal   Sanctuary Chancel Choir   Sanctuary
<b>Thu.</b> Feb. 5	9am 1:30pm 2:45pm 5pm 5:15pm 6pm	Book Group   Library Yadahs Small Group   Lounge PASS After School Program   Great Hall Personnel Committee   Library Serving Meals   Safe Harbor New Women   Confirmation Room
<b>Fri.</b> Feb. 6	11:15am	Worship Band Rehearsal   Sanctuary

## CONTACT OUR CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor - Matt Wilcox.....	mwilcox@firstpresnormal.org
Associate Pastor - 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
Administrative Assistant - Anne Lunt .....	alunt@firstpresnormal.org
A/V Technician - Tyler Gatto .....	tgatto@firstpresnormal.org
Property Manager - John Anderson .....	janderson@firstpresnormal.org