

STREAMER

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle

7300 Belvidere Road

Caledonia, Illinois 61011

815-885-3455

January 2015

from the Pastor's Pen:

Much to my disappointment last month, my provider dropped one of my favorite channels. I'm glad to say it is back, along with several others devoted to cheesy Christmas movies. I enjoy them, even though they are all the same. Spoiler alert: Christmas doesn't go well, or at least that is the general premise. It falls apart because some bad memory has become associated with Christmas, or because the wrong kids show up to be part of the Christmas program, or because there is not enough time or money to celebrate, or because someone is too greedy to let anyone else have any comfort and joy. In the end, of course, Christmas is predictably saved by the advent of some new grace or generosity.

Those cheesy movies know more about Christmas than we might think. Many of us are so familiar with the stories (Yes, there are two different biblical stories about the Advent of the Christ Child, though we usually combine them.) from Matthew and Luke that we don't notice how poorly the whole thing goes. The emperor, who can do this sort of thing, tells the entire empire to get up and travel to their ancestral cities to be registered and taxed. A woman gives birth in a barn. She's not married to the child's father, and her explanation of how she got pregnant in the first place is pretty suspect. Not long after the birth, the whole family has to run for their lives.

The world seems to have fallen completely apart. God's people lived in the promised land, but they suffered oppression and terror. The prophets told of a future king to reign on God's behalf, but it often seemed no such leader was coming. People debated whether to cling to what seemed obsolete religious forms and codes and habits. We celebrate Christmas in the winter, not because this is when it happened, but because it took place in a world whose prospects were late-December dark, dark, dark.

In perfect narrative form, Christ comes into a world where things have become so wrong, so dark, that we can hardly imagine a new light shining. Christ's birth shines and embodies God's powerful redemption, setting us free from the shortcomings, rejections, and failures that can so disfigure hope, joy and peace. Jesus comes among us to break down walls we perceive between ourselves and God, between ourselves and one another. Beginning in chaos and confusion, proceeding through wisdom, rejection, and even death, the Christmas story ends with renewed and unending life. Well, really, it doesn't end; the story continues in our stories and our lives together now as the Body of Christ.

Although we might dream of a picture-perfect Christmas, I'm not sure that one exists...not in the movies, not even in the biblical narrative. I do, however, trust that God, who has drawn strength from weakness and life from death, can bring beauty from a muddled mess. From time to time we've all found ourselves in a mess during the "happiest time of the year." And we've come out of it with stories of God's faithfulness in the worst of times. Maybe this would be a good year to share those stories with our children, grandchildren, and friends. Your testimony of grace, through word and deed even in the midst of your own messy story, can help highlight the Grace present in someone else's story. Emmanuel--God With Us, will create something good and joyful as we share the gift of Christ, even in the most messy and unexpected ways!

*Wish you all a very
fruitful advent
season and a*



*Merry
christmas!*



Dear Friends from Willow Creek Mariners,

Thank you for your \$ 200.00 contribution (check #2016, Nov.12, 2014) to the Annual Fund Drive for Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center. We are grateful for all contributions as we plan for the future of this 50+ year mission and ministry of the Presbytery of Blackhawk. With support such as yours, Stronghold will continue to be a special place of retreat, new friendships and spiritual

growth. Your support through the years is very much appreciated. Please let us know if we can provide a program for you or any group at Willow Creek.

Sincerely, Jan Hartman, Director of Operations and Program Development



Dear Friends:

Thank you for your generous contribution to the work of Church World Service - which we appreciate more than ever in these challenging times.

Your compassionate support is helping impoverished communities

- develop clean, reliable water sources.
- teach poor farmers sustainable ways to create food security
- provide food, water, shelter and other necessities to families struggling to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, after natural disasters and civil conflict.

I have seen both the resilience and the resolve of the women, men and children we assist. And I have been deeply moved by the generosity of people like you, who give hope and opportunity to people in need, here in the U.S. and around the world.

May God bless you for your kindness.

Rev. John L. McCullough, President and CEO, Church World Service

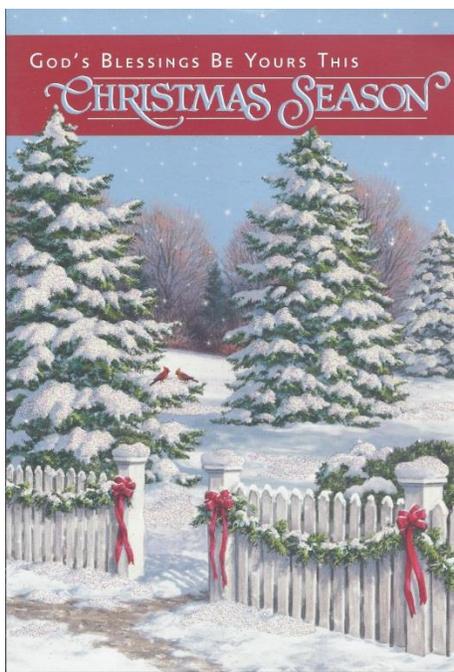
Gift of \$93 for the around the world processing & shipping donated by the WCPC Mariners

Dear Friends at Willow Creek Mission Committee,

Thank you for your \$126.25 contribution (check #16202, Oct.24, 2014) to Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center. We are grateful for all contributions as we plan for the future of this 50+ year mission and ministry of the Presbytery of Blackhawk. With support such as yours, Stronghold will continue to be a special place of retreat, new friendships and spiritual growth.

Sincerely, Jan Hartman, Director of Operations and Program Development





Wishing you the comfort of His love,
the joy of His salvation,
and the peace of His presence.

Merry Christmas!

*Thank you for allowing us to
serve with you in 2014!*

Paul Henson & P-H-M

Dear Willow Creek:

Thank you for your Thanksgiving gift to Rockford Rescue Mission. We often say where hunger ends, hope begins, and your generosity allows that to happen here in so many different ways.

The men and women who turn to us are battling homelessness, addiction and other life challenges. They're hungry for food, yes, but also for compassion, guidance and God's unconditional love. When they receive those here-through our programs that allow us to rescue, recover and restore their broken lives-they have hope for a new beginning.

This Thanksgiving-'-as all year-round-we thank God for your partnership and the many blessings your gifts' bring to our ministry and those we serve. Thank you again for your kindness.

Partners in Hope, Sherry Pifpey, Executive Director
Official Gift Receipt for Rockford Rescue Mission in the amount of \$65



rockford rescue mission
rescue + recover + restore



Dear Willow Creek Congregation,

Thank you for the Christmas Bonuses. We appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,

Diane VanVleet, Stephanie Konen, Doris Pacek, and Carol Nevicosi

The Kirkin' o' The Tartans

The Worship and Music Committee is excited at the possibility of celebrating a “Kirkin’ o’ the Tartans” service next year! In our first Streamer article, we defined “Tartan” as a fabric woven to identify all those within a family or clan. The blessing of these Tartans was a blessing of the entire family. While the Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle was originally established in 1844 by Scottish immigrants, we are no longer predominantly Scotsmen. Many a young Scot has chosen a life partner of another ethnicity; and we have been blessed to welcome new church members with a great variety of heritage. We encourage ALL our wonderful families to take part! The WCPC “Kirkin’ o’ the Tartans” service, therefore, will be more a “Kirkin’ o’ the Families”. A kick-off meeting will be held after church, during Fellowship Hour, on January 18, to share ideas and assign sub-committees.

Please join us!!!



STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION

The title might be ABCD. The meaning is; ABOVE and BEYOND the CALL of DUTY. The purpose would be to recognize individuals, couples or groups that served God through Willow Creek Presbyterian Church ABCD. The time frame might be recently, quarterly or even annually. Nominations could be made directly or anonymously to members of the Mission, Membership and Stewardship Committee. Please share your thoughts on this endeavor with any member of the Mission, Membership and Stewardship Committee (David Ensminger, Sherri Finley, Pat Nortch, Delores Hall, Jim Hall) or Pastor Judith.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DIME?

Just ask the 90,000 k – 8 schools nationwide who have received over \$600,000,000 through the BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION program since 1996!

Each of those points gleaned from box tops from 250 participating products is worth a DIME – oh but how they add up.

If you are not already collecting these box tops, consider starting. There is a display at the rear of the Fellowship Hall with a Quaker Oats box where you can place your box tops. When a sufficient number have been collected, we will forward them to Kemmerer Village who is our chosen recipient.



THANK YOU!!



Fellowship

How better to get to know our Church Family than through our weekly fellowship gatherings here at WCPC. Through casual conversations, we can share things we have in common and enlighten ourselves relative to what our fellow parishioners BRING TO THE TABLE.

This can only be possible with the support and participation of the entire congregation! Please consider signing up to host a Sunday in the near future. You will enjoy the experience and your life will be enriched accordingly.

THANK YOU!



Christmas Blessings to the Willow Creek Congregation from the staff,

Dianne VanVleet, Bookkeeper

Stephanie Konen, Preschool Director/Teacher

Doris Pacek, Cleaning Service

Carol Nevicosi, Secretary

The Health Care Ministries would like to extend a **WARM** Thank you for your generous donations of children’s scarves, mittens, gloves and hats to the Christmas Giving Tree.



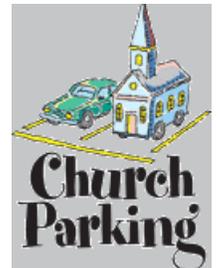
at what’s NEW at Willow Creek Presbyterian Church

If you wish to donate to this project, please make the check payable to WCPC and note on the memo line “Facilities Project”.

Goal is \$30,000 - \$27

,403 raised so far!

Thank you for your support!



WCPC Operating Statistics

November, 2014

Income 18,124.00

Expenses 15,374.00

Previous Month -



Mark your calendars for **January 4** when we'll have an undecorating party after church and, when all work is done, enjoy a light lunch/refreshments.

Calling all ringers, Bell Choir Schedule as follows:

January 3 (Saturday) @ 10:30 am

Thursdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29 @ 6:30 pm

Contact Dianne Londo for further information 815-623-8512.



Choir Rehearsal:

January 4, 11, 18, 25 @ 8:30 am

Children's Choir Rehearsal:

January 11, 18, 25 @ 11:00 am

Mariners will meet in the church fellowship hall on Tuesday, January 13 @ 11:30. Lunch will be served.



Many thanks to my Willow Creek friends and family for the generous \$100 year-end bonus; for the loving prayers, meals, and flowers during my treatment for Breast Cancer; and, most of all, for graciously calling me to love and serve Christ in you!

Peace and Joy, Pastor Judith



Another milestone has been reached as the WCPC

Annual Cookie Walk has come and gone. By 8:30 a.m.

on Saturday, December 6, Fellowship Hall was fragrant

with "The Sweet Smell of Cookies and Cinnamon Rolls"

and by 12:00 noon, the aroma had changed to "The

Sweet Smell of Success". It was gratifying to see the

number of people who were at the door well in advance

of the scheduled opening and exciting to see the number

of neighbors from near and a little farther who come back year after year. This event allowed us to turn over the total sum of \$2378.02 to the Mission Committee to be disbursed to local area families in need. Almost \$200 of that amount was due to the hand-knitted items donated by Barb Greenlee and JoAnn Buffington. It took many, many hands and hours to produce such a beautiful array of Christmas Cookies and for that we are so grateful. In addition, the Cookie Walk Committee did an outstanding job of coordinating the event, posting signs, contacting various media, setting up the displays, running the café, etc., etc. and producing much of the baked goods themselves. This was truly an all-congregation effort. **Great Job, everybody!!**

Cookie Walk 2014
Thanks to All Who Made The Cookie Walk a Great Success!



Christmas Decorating





Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle presents

"In My Heart There Rings a Melody"

A Handbell Choir Concert



Sunday, February 15, 2015 at 3:00 p.m.

7300 Belvidere Road, Caledonia, IL 61011



No admission is charged, but non-perishable food items will be collected at the door. A raffle ticket for a Cookies By Design Bouquet will be given for every food item brought to the concert.

A free will offering will be collected to support the Holistic Health Department's Music Therapy Program at Swedish American Hospital.

Light refreshments will be served.



THE ORIGINAL COOKIE BOUQUET COMPANY

Tour around WCPC



Photos courtesy of Dianne Londo and Pastor Judith. If you have a church photo you would like to share, please email to willowcreekchrch@aol.com or drop-off at the church office.

January 2015 All Church Calendar

Thur 1/1	---	Pastor Vacation
	---	Church Office Closed
Fri 1/2	---	Pastor Vacation
	---	Church Office Closed
Sat 1/3	---	Pastor Returns from Vacation
	10:30 am	Bell Rehearsal
Sun 1/4	8:30 am	Choir Rehearsal
	9:00 am	Sunday School
	10:00 am	Sunday Worship with Communion (Choir Sings for Worship)
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	11:00 am	Undecorating Party after church followed by light lunch/refreshments
Mon 1/5	---	Preschool Resumes after Holiday Break
	7-9 pm	Session Meeting
Tue 1/6	8:30 am	Endowment Meting
	10:00-11:30 am	Baby Angel Closet Distribution
Thur 1/8	6:30 pm	Bells Rehearsal
Fri 1/9	3:30-5:30 pm	Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall/Kitchen
Sun 1/11	8:30 am	Choir Rehearsal
	9:00 am	Sunday School (CE Birthday Party for Jesus; Sr. High joining)
	10:00 am	Worship (Choir Sings for Worship)
	11:00 am	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	TBD	Youth Group
Mon 1/12	9:00 am	Pastor @ Stronghold
	9:30 am	Membership/Mission/Stewardship Meeting
	3:30 pm	Pastor Meeting with Liz O'Leary
Tue 1/13	11:30 am	Mariners @ WCPC (Kitchen & Fellowship Hall Reserved 9:30am – 2:30pm)
Wed 1/14	2:00 pm	Deacons Meeting
Thur 1/15	6:30 pm	Bells Rehearsal
Sun 1/18	8:30 am	Choir Rehearsal
	9:00 am	Sunday School
	10:00 am	Worship (Choir Sings for Worship)
	11:00 am	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	11:00	Kirkin' o' Tartan's Kickoff during Fellowship Hour
	TBD	Youth Group
Mon 1/19	---	No Preschool (Martin Luther King Holiday)
Tue 1/20	---	No Preschool (Martin Luther King Holiday)
	9:00 am	Buildings & Grounds Meeting
Wed 1/21	Noon	Pastor Presby Lunch (11:30 am departure)
Thur 1/22	6:30 pm	Bells Rehearsal
Fri 1/23	3:30-5:30 pm	Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall/Kitchen
Sun 1/25	8:30 am	Choir Rehearsal
	9:00 am	Sunday School
	10:00 am	Worship (Choir Sings for Worship)
	11:00 am	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	11:20 am	Fellowship & Personnel Meeting
	TBD	Youth Group
Mon 1/26	---	Pastor Com Retreat
Tue 1/27	---	Pastor Com Retreat
	9:30 am	Martha Ruth Circle
Thur 1/29	6:30 pm	Bells Rehearsal