



STREAMER

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle

7300 Belvidere Road

Caledonia, Illinois 61011

815-885-3455

January 2017

Dear Willow Creek Family and Friends,

As I gather my thoughts to write the monthly installment of the Pastor's Corner, recent conversations come to mind. I have pointed more than one person to last year's Streamer (introducing Coffee Hours and the lesson of Desert Pete—you can find our Streamer archives at willowcreekpc.org/news/newsletter). It is not always easy to give first, to reach out with no strings attached, or to live intentionally in loving and humble kindness; it's not easy being Christian.

As Christians, we're not called to live lives of ease in high-society, we are called to love—everyone! Look around-- family dynamics, church politics and politics in general can generate difficult storms to navigate, especially if we are supposed to love all of these folks! Don't worry, however, because loving and liking are two different things. Though we might want to like everyone, especially at church, that should not be our goal. In fact, if you like everyone at church, that is more of an indicator of decline, because one of four things is probably happening:

1. You're not really paying attention to others.
2. You've recently been saved, everything is joyous, and nothing could rain on your parade.
3. You're not being honest. Deep down, some people bother you—a lot!
4. Everybody here is just like you. We look, sound, think, believe, and act in similar ways.

What's not to like?

If the first applies, wake up! Life is passing you by--good and bad. Hang around more, get involved more, widen your circle and enhance your life! If the second applies, congratulations, I've been there a few times. Two years ago I delivered Cookie Walk cookies I had purchased to my Beloit and Madison doctors and nurses—I had a new lease on life and liked everybody...but that didn't last. Life cannot always be roses, rainbows and unicorns. LOL If you actually admitted to being a bit bothered, breathe a sigh of relief--this is a good sign. It means we have a certain amount of diversity whether it's generational, theological, political or cultural. Perhaps you lead with the head and others with the heart, or vice-versa. Perhaps you are methodical, quiet and thoughtful while others jump into things or talk incessantly. Diversity can be frustrating, but it is absolutely necessary for growth and long-term sustainability. Healthy DNA, robust ecosystems, and strong economies all depend upon diversity. You may think we want to be more homogenous like #4, but there can be too much harmony. Too much stability, dependability, and predictability can quickly diminish the life and ministry of the church -- and there's a whole world out there needing to see Christ!

Jesus' own followers were quite diverse, and included people who didn't like each other. Some were quiet, some headstrong; some got out of the boat, some cowered in the storm; some were fishermen, some scholars; some were tax collectors and some poorer than poor. They brought different gifts to the table, and the movement grew and changed and spread and survived. As Christians, I'm sure they loved each other, but I doubt they'd have been friends save for the common purpose of sharing God's love.

We can tell by the stories of the disciples that Jesus knew the value of diversity, and so should we. But, you say, we have tried to invite new and different people, we have tried going out to various places to recruit new members, and it just doesn't work.... Please, you might have misunderstood our New Beginning. We are not out to recruit new Willow Creek members. We are not out to change others or to bring people to Christ. We are out to change ourselves, to bring Christ to others, and perhaps attract them to join in the effort (even if we never speak the name of God). So what, then, can we do to move toward this New Beginning? Here are a few simple (not easy) suggestions:

1. When you are out, notice who you avoid, judge, or steer clear of. You might think, "Tsk, tsk!" but stop and greet them, not because they need to hear from you, but because you may need to hear and learn from them.
2. Notice someone different--perhaps an outrageous hair style, an unusual job, an unfamiliar accent, a different skin color or a noticeable tattoo. Make eye contact. Smile. Talk to them.
3. Start making an effort to go to new places. Shop in new stores. Eat in new places. Speak with new and different people. You will get better at anything you practice; it will get easier.
4. When you're ready to go beyond the weather, ask people what they love about their lives. Ask them where they find beauty in the world. Ask them if there is some concern you could add to your nightly prayer. (You do pray nightly, right?).

You might find that these people still rub you the wrong way, and that is okay. Don't stop. They may have something you need — a new way of looking at the world, a different style of communication, a unique way of understanding God, or even a mirror reflecting a lesson about yourself. Now that you've gone out of your way to meet new and different people, see if you can find people at church that you wouldn't normally talk to. People you suspect would upset you. Go out of your way to meet them and get to know them. Discover the ways your personalities and preferences complement each other instead of duplicate each other. As you find ways to do Kingdom work together, you'll discover the curious strength of diversity, and perhaps even a little more of your God-given purpose in your time with us at Willow Creek--a faith community, growing together, sharing the love of Christ!

Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to you all!

Pastor Judith

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 \$104 given for the shipping of the school kits. Thank you for your generosity.



Dear Willow Creek Staff and Parishioners:

I would like to thank you for your donation!! Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

Your donation of the \$347.00 is very generous and helps us tremendously!

As we continue to grow our program, we find many ways to improve it as well. As our board members collaborate, ideas are discussed and voted upon so that we can continue to offer help to our citizens.

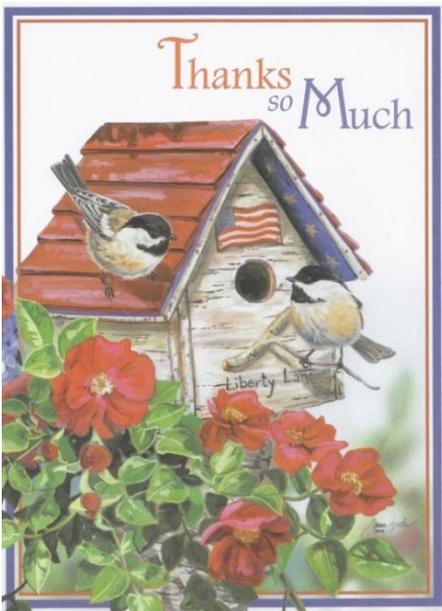
We would love to have you join us and experience what the Kitchen Table offers to the community. We would love to hear how you discovered our community cafe.

We will also be giving out Christmas tree bundles to families in need and hopefully will include a complete Christmas dinner package for them to prepare on Christmas day.

It is great to finally have the doors open!! It has been going well here and we continue to work hard to improve our organization in more ways than one. We find that the community does not fully understand what we offer here, so we ask that you help us spread the word!!

Thank you so much for your support!!

Sincerely, Carolyn Brown, Executive Director



We want to say "Thank You" to all who helped make the services for Steve so wonderful. We appreciate all the work our fellow members put in the service and luncheon to make it happen. Thanks again.

May God Bless our Church and all our members,
Gordon and Pat Bindenagel



THANK YOU

November 29, 2016

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church
7300 Belvidere Rd.
Caledonia, IL 61011

Donor ID: 1741

Dear Friends,

In these busy days of holy days and holidays, of family and church budget planning, I write simply to say thank you, for making Presbyterian Disaster Assistance a priority in the midst of many opportunities to give and serve. Your gift is deeply needed and greatly appreciated, and I am privileged to speak this word of gratitude on behalf of those for whom your generosity brings renewed hope and joy in the wake of disaster and its aftermath.

The last four months of the calendar year, as Fall yields to Thanksgiving and the Christmas season, always seem stuffed with opportunities and obligations. But we people of faith keep time in a different way! All Saints, the Reign of Christ, and the hopeful, mysterious days of Advent and Christmas remind us that we are a people whose choices-for giving, for engaging our time and our talents-do not happen in a vacuum. We are, as scripture says, *surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses*, those who have built a generous foundation upon which we stand, those who stand in need of our support. Your generosity brings relief and supports recovery among the vulnerable-- persons like the holy Child and his mother, who, together with Joseph wandered in search of shelter, fled persecution in their home country and became refugees in Egypt. When you *do it unto the least of these*, as Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 25, you give gifts to Christ, and make the coming of his reign a reality.

It is a privilege to serve together in a Church that works toward the vision of *the tree of life in the midst of the City, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations*, even as we wait for One whose life, death, and resurrection is both the beginning and end of our story.

In Christ's peace,

Laurie

The Rev. Dr. Laurie A. Kraus
Coordinator, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Date	Fund Description	Amount
11/16/2015	DR000191 Disaster Relief--U.S. Flooding	\$500.00
	Batch Number: 161116-696-176-bcs	Check No.: 18180



After I drove home in the snow last Sunday, I finally relaxed, sat down and opened my Santa bag from church. How nice it was to read all of your encouraging words and receive your gifts cards, etc. A few were anonymous....thank you all (you know who you are.) It was much appreciated.
Liz

Thank you all very much for the Christmas gift bag full of cards and gift cards and also to the choir for their generous gift card. They are truly appreciated.
Tom Andrew



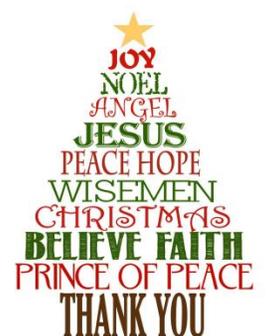
Thank you for your wonderful notes, cards, and gifts. Your heartfelt words mean a lot to me.
Wishing you a Blessed New Year, Carol Nevicosi

Thank you to the Willow Creek Congregation for the gift bag of cards and gift cards. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.
Happy Holidays, Stephanie Konen



Thank you all so very much for the bag full of goodies. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.
Season's Greetings to all, Diane VanVleet

Thank you for the cards, notes, treats and gifts this Christmas! Your kind words of love and encouragement warmed my heart.
Many blessings of Christmas Joy to you all! Pastor Judith





rockford rescue mission
rescue + recover + restore

Dear Willow Creek:

Joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, whose hope is in the Lord their God. Psalm 146:5

Christmas joy comes in many packages for our neighbors we serve here at Rockford Rescue Mission.

For those who have lost their livelihoods and homes, life essentials like *food and shelter* make a difference. For those battling addiction, *compassionate counseling and recovery* are the first steps to a new beginning. For those working hard to regain their independence, *life skills training* provides opportunities for a stable life.

And the greatest gift of all-*Christ's unconditional love*-gives hope for the future to every individual in our care.

It's a gift many are experiencing for the very first time.

We're so grateful for your congregation's support which is helping us bring Christmas joy-in so many forms-to hundreds of our community's homeless and struggling this holiday season. Your kind generosity and partnership tells those in our care that they haven't been forgotten. And that alone is a gift in itself. God bless you for your compassion.

Thank you on behalf of everyone at Rockford Rescue Mission.

Partners in Hope, Sherry Pitney

Gift of \$285.35 sent in December 2016

STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION

ABOVE and BEYOND the CALL of DUTY recognizes individuals, couples or groups that serve God through Willow Creek Presbyterian Church.

Nominations forms can be obtained on the welcome stand outside Fellowship Hall near the Education Wing. Completed nominations can be deposited in the box on the welcome stand. Nominations can also be made directly to Pastor Judith.



**2017 Contribution Envelopes are available in the Fellowship Hall.
If you did not get a box, but would like one please let us know.**





Fellowship Matters!
 PLEASE SUPPORT OUR FELLOWSHIP
 HOUR
 HOW CAN **YOU** SERVE?

**GO ALL IN!
 GO & DO!**

- Sign up to host a Sunday Morning Fellowship. The sign-up sheet is on the Fellowship Table.
- When you are baking at home, bake extra for the church. We will “Bank Baked Goods” in the freezer (labeled & dated) and get them out for Fellowship whenever we have a blank Sunday.
- When you walk down the juice aisle of your favorite grocery store, pick up a jug or two of juice (Hawaiian Punch, etc.) and bring it/mark it for Sunday Fellowship.
- When you are at church, volunteer to serve on a blank Sunday, we welcome your help any time in the kitchen. As you may have heard, the new coffee maker is easy to work!
- Volunteer to be a greeter-or better yet, seek out newcomers and folks you might not know so well. Help build this Christian Fellowship!



**WCPC Operating Statistics
 November 2016**

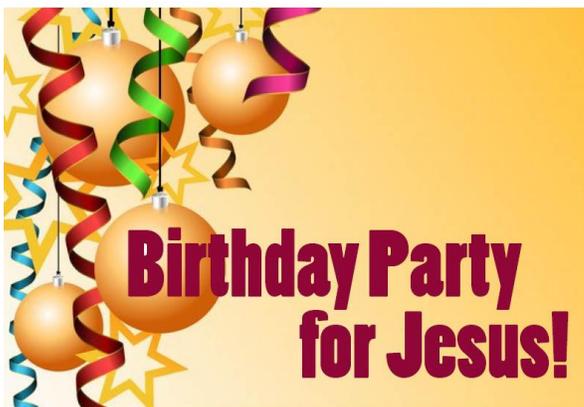
Our offerings of \$13,990.00 (plus misc. income) for November enabled us to cover the month's expenses, but not add much cushion for expected increase seasonal expense for heating, and snow removal.



We were blessed through November and early December this year with our weather. Stay warm and safe as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus.

WCPC Operating Statistics

	November, 2016	Year-to-Date
Income	14,312.57	143,638.10
Expenses	12,892.28	160,562.46
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,420.29	(16,924.36)



Birthday Party for Jesus/Undecorating Party

On Sunday January 8th, we will combine the Birthday Party for Jesus and the tasks of undecorating the church. There will be games for children immediately after church while we start undecorating. A Crock Pot Potluck will follow and end with a birthday cake for Jesus. Please come join us. Bring your favorite crock pot recipe. Rolls, crackers, relishes, drinks and table settings will be provided.



Suggestions for gifts for birthday party for Jesus

- Diapers all sizes from Newborn to size 6 • Baby Wipes • Diaper Rash Cream • Baby Wash
Bibs • Pacifiers • Bottles • Onesies all sizes from Newborn to 3T
• Gently used clothing for Newborn to 24 months.
• We especially need little boy clothing, newborn to 24 months.

Any and all gifts will be very much appreciated for the Baby Angel Closet. The list above includes the items that are requested on almost all the forms we receive from clients. Some need all and others just a few of the items. Formula is requested but we do not try to stock it since it has an expiration date and there are several kinds. It is purchased as needed.

We just received a wonderful gift of homemade blankets from a young “neighbor” to our church. She and her grandmother made about 24 blankets for little babies. They are on display on a table in Social Hall.

Holiday Church Office Hours:

Office Open - Wed, Dec 28 & Thur, Dec 29

Office Closed - Fri, Dec 30



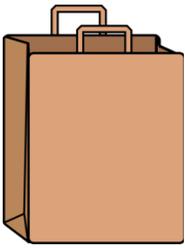
New & Gently Used Toy and Book Drive

Thank you for your generosity!

The Hat and Mitten Tree

The Mission Committee would like to thank all who gave to the Hat and Mitten Tree! Donations were delivered to Carpenter's Place and Shelter Care Ministries.





Going Shopping?

As you are out and about doing your seasonal shopping, please remember to save and bring in your gently used paper or plastic shopping bags for us to re-use in our Babies In Need ministry.



Gather & Gospel Class
Sundays, 9:00-9:50 am.

No Class December 25,
January 1st or January 8th



Christmas Card Tree on Sanctuary Landing

If you did not receive a Christmas Card from the following people, check the Christmas Card Tree. They made a contribution to WCPC as part of the Kemmerer Village Project instead of mailing a card.

Dick & Carolyn Wheeler
Jim & Delores Hall
David & Janet Ensminger
Janet Hyland
Gene & Carolyn Wheeler

John & Kim Reid
JoAnne & Wilbur Reid
Lee Pickett
The Rottman Family

Choir Rehearsal:

January 1: 9:00 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Chancel Choir sings for Worship

January 8, 15, 22, and 29:
8:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Chancel Choir sings for Worship
11:00am Young People's Choir Rehearsal



No Bell Rehearsal in the month of January.

Martha Ruth Circle

Martha Ruth Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Delores Hall. We will study the 3rd lesson in the Horizon Study, Who Is Jesus?



Mariner January Meeting

Mariners will meet at the church on Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and games. Lunch will be chili and/or soup. Officers will host.

Cookie Walk

Thank you for another successful Cookie Walk

WE DID IT..... WILLOW CREEK CHURCH BAKERS, TAKE A BOW!!!

We produced 432 dozen beautifully decorated, enticing cookies for the 2016 Cookie Walk and earned \$2457.40 for our mission of addressing the immediate needs of local families in crisis. For those of you who were not at the church when we opened, you should have seen the crowd. Customers were lined up clear down the education wing. Once we opened the doors, our replenishers were hard pressed to keep cookies on the tables. The cookies were literally flying into the pastry boxes. It was a glorious frenzy. The 24 chairs in our little café were occupied most of the time with some of our congregants and many “strangers” sharing hot drinks, cookies, cinnamon rolls and lively conversation. The best part is that we had very nearly 100% church participation and even some help from friends of the congregation. That was the key to our success. Thank you, thank you to the committee, all who baked and decorated cookies, set-up for the sale, loaned table decorations & trays, advertised, and phoned for cookie commitments, provided Christmas music....the list goes on and on. THANK YOU!!!



Cookie Walk 2016



December 11, 2016 Christmas Program



January 2017 All Church Calendar 12/20/2016

Sun 1/1	9:00 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	10:00 am	Worship; Mission of the Month-MELD
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
Wed 1/4	---	Preschool Resumes
	7:00 – 9:00 pm	Session Meeting
Sun 1/8	8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	10:00 am	Worship
	11:00 am	<i>Birthday Party for Jesus; Undecorating Church followed by Crock Pot Potluck</i>
	11:00 am	Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
	6:15-7:30 pm	Drum Circle
Mon 1/9	9:00 am	Mission Meeting
Tue 1/10	11:30 am	<i>Mariners @ Church for Chili and/or Soup & Games (Officers Hosting)</i>
	5:30 pm	Music & Worship Meeting
	7:00 pm	Finance/Personnel/Endowment Meeting
Thur 1/12	1:30 pm	Deacon Meeting
Sun 1/15	8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:50 am	Gather & Gospel
	10:00 am	Worship
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	11:00 am	Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
Mon 1/16	---	No Preschool –Martin Luther King Holiday
Tues 1/17	---	No Preschool –Martin Luther King Holiday
	8:00 am	Buildings & Grounds Meeting
Wed 1/18	12:15 pm	Preschool Meeting
Sun 1/22	8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:50 am	Gather & Gospel
	10:00 am	Worship
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	11:00 am	Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
	6:15-7:30 pm	Drum Circle
Tue 1/24	9:30 am	<i>Martha Ruth Circle –Delores Hall Hosting @ her house</i>
Sun 1/29	8:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:50 am	Gather & Gospel
	10:00 am	Worship
	11:00 am	Fellowship
	11:00 am	Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)

**Looking for a “Special” Present for
your Grandparent, Family, or Child?**

Look no further...2017 Stronghold Summer Camps are here!
more information is available at www.strongholdcenter.org
or pick up a brochure at Willow Creek Presbyterian Church

2017 STRONGHOLD SUMMER CAMPS

Date	Event	Sleeping Area	Grade Completed	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III	Squire Circle
June 16-18	Grandcamp	Heritage Lodge	Grandparents & Grandchildren ages 5-12	\$150 \$100 \$75	\$175 \$125 \$75	\$200 \$150 \$100	\$250 \$200 \$150
June 25-30	Jr. Eco-Explorers Jr. Castle Camp Climb High	Sears Center Castle Summer Cabins/Tents	3-6 3-6 7-11	\$325 \$335 \$370	\$375 \$385 \$420	\$425 \$435 \$470	\$525 \$535 \$570
July 5-14	Jr. High 10-Day Sr. High 10-Day	Summer Cabins Summer Cabins	6-8 9-12	\$455 \$465	\$520 \$530	\$585 \$595	\$700 \$700
July 5-8	Mini Camp	Sears Center	2-4	\$170	\$200	\$230	\$280
July 9-14	Jr. Adventure Jr. M.A.D.	Summer Cabins Sears Center	3-5 3-6	\$310 \$330	\$360 \$380	\$410 \$430	\$510 \$530
July 16-21	Night Owl Sr. High Night Owl	Sears Center Carriage House	6-8 9-12	\$350 \$360	\$400 \$410	\$450 \$460	\$550 \$560
July 17-21	Day Adventure	Summer Cabins	K-3	\$103	\$128	\$153	\$203
July 23-28	Jr. Artists Hydro Camp Wilderness Adventure Medieval M.A.D.	Sears Center Carriage House Tents Castle	3-6 3-6 6-8 6-8	\$335 \$340 \$350 \$350	\$385 \$390 \$400 \$400	\$435 \$440 \$450 \$450	\$535 \$540 \$550 \$550
July 28-30	Family Camp I	Heritage Lodge/Tents	Open to all	See Description			
July 30- August 4	Jr. Discovery Camper vs. Wild Jr. High Adventure Sr. High Adventure	Sears Center Summer Cabins/Tents Summer Cabins Summer Cabins	3-6 6-8 6-8 9-12	\$335 \$345 \$335 \$350	\$385 \$395 \$385 \$400	\$435 \$445 \$435 \$450	\$535 \$545 \$535 \$550
August 4-5	Family Camp II	Heritage Lodge/Tents	Open to all	See Description			



Women's Retreat
February
10th—12th 2017
Leadership: TO BE
ANNOUNCED IN THE NEW
YEAR



Shared Room: \$165*

Private Room: \$240*

***Includes all meals, evening snacks and retreat supplies.**

SPACE IS LIMITED. To register please visit
www.strongholdcenter.org
or call 815-732-6111 today

Men's Retreat
February
3rd—5th 2017
Leadership: Pastor Jonathan Krogh
(First Presbyterian Church, La
Grange)



Shared Room: \$165*

Private Room: \$240*

***Includes all meals, evening snacks and retreat supplies.**

SPACE IS LIMITED. To register please visit
www.strongholdcenter.org
or call 815-732-6111 today