



# STREAMER

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle

7300 Belvidere Road

Caledonia, Illinois 61011

815-885-3455

December 2016

## Seasons of Grace

Where did Advent originate? The earliest believers worshipped mostly on the Lord's Day in weekly celebrations of the resurrection both to build communal identity and to nourish their Christian mission. What we now know as the liturgical seasons did not begin to emerge until close to the turn of the third century. By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the feast day of Easter and the Resurrection was widely celebrated, followed 50 days later by the feast of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to birth the Church. There was so much to unpack in the Scriptures, the different stories and their implications for the Christian community, that Eastertide became the first season between the first two feast days. Because Easter was seen as the perfect time for bringing new life into the Christian community, a forty-day period (season) of fasting, prayer, and instruction developed for these initiates. Soon, the whole community joined them in a seasonal spiritual preparation that became known as Lent and lead to a greater celebration of New Life, renewal and feasting at Easter.

Christians did not begin celebrating the birth of Jesus until the mid-fourth century. Like Easter, it was not so much the celebration of a particular event, but more an annual commemoration of God's self-emptying love and embrace of humanity. Just like with Easter, a season of Christmastide developed for celebrating the visit of the Magi and the wide, wide circle of divine love at Epiphany, and a period of preparation also developed. Advent (from the Latin word for Coming) became a season to study Scriptures and stories of expectation and hope—both the hope of the coming of Christ in the fullness of time, and the joy-filled anticipation and hope of the Christ child's birth. So, the goal of Advent is to help us prepare for the first time, or once more, to be given the message of Love at Christmas and prepare to engage in its meaning in our lives and in the world today.

Everyone can benefit from considering these liturgical patterns of lessons and prayers, these seasons of discernment. Especially in a culture where the "holidays" have been hijacked by commercial excess, social obligation, and nostalgic sentimentality, I think it is important for each of us to consider what it would mean to return to the more spiritual and instructive foundations of the seasons. What would it mean for us as individuals and as a family called together by God if we were to view Advent as a time when we might be opened to a new awareness of God at work in our lives? What would it mean for us, both individually and corporately, if this year we celebrated Christmas not as an end of the holidays, but as the beginning of a new and spiritual celebratory season in our lives together here?

This Advent, let us commit to gathering as often as is possible together with others to worship, study, pray and listen. This Advent, even as the days are growing darker, let us look forward to the light; let us begin to plan the new ways we can welcome the light and peace of our gracious God more and more into our daily lives, activities, worship and mission. Please join us as often as you can in this next season God is opening for Willow Creek; invite those you care about to come as well, and let us all learn to bear the light and love of Christ for all people together this Christmas and beyond!

Luke 1:78-79 *"By the tender mercy of God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*



I feel like "thank you" just isn't enough. But, your kindness and generosity means so much to us.

Tim, Tina Pacek and Family (Family in Need Receptiant)



Your \$40 donation continues to help us provide those necessities for the lives of the more than 1,000 individuals as we serve each month.

We are so thankful for your continued support.



**A great BIG THANK YOU** to all of you who were able to stay after church Sunday, November 12 to help decorate the church for Advent and the Christmas season. We appreciate your time and energy. God bless you all!

Worship and Music Committee

To My Dear Church Family,  
Thank you to Pastor Judith for her visit to the hospital the day of surgery. She even beat me there. Many thanks for all your cards, phone calls, prayers and concerns about me these past weeks. Each day I am feeling better. Hope to be back to church real soon as I do miss all of you.

Love and Blessings, Carolyn Wheeler



I would like to tell everyone that I will cherish my six years as Music Director at Willow Creek and I will miss you.

I leave with good feelings for the future, for your church and for me personally. It is time for a change and time to move ahead. Don't let me be a stranger. Ask me back to sing.

You have my prayers for continued success in your ministry and music.

Elizabeth LaGrande O'Leary

## Church World School Kits!

The Kits were packed and were sent to Presbytery with Pastor Judith on November 14. We met the challenge of 5 clean up buckets, 10 hygiene kits, and 25 school bags and supplies. Thanks to everyone who took the post-its and brought back items to go into each of these kits. With the storms, flooding and hurricanes that have touched our country some of these kits may never leave the United States but may help those in need in Texas, Florida and other southern states that were affected by the storms. The Mission Team thanks all who helped with this effort!



## 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.

**Fellowship is an important part of our gathering. Sign-up is available in the Kitchen Window.** Help us welcome newcomers with light refreshments and warm hearts. If you need any assistance setting up or serving for Fellowship, please call Sandy Bell cell # 815-871-6301.



## Want to help out at Northern IL Food Bank?

Go to website [www.SolveHungerToday.org](http://www.SolveHungerToday.org)  
or call 815-639-1257 to sign up.

## Habitat for Humanity - Boone County

Belvidere Build invites us to the house blessing at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, November 27, @ 320 Gilman St. (off East Pleasant St), Belvidere





### December Choir Rehearsals:

12/3 8:30-9:15 am

12/10 8:30-9:30 am

12/17 8:30-9:30 am (special choral Christmas program in worship)

No rehearsal 12/24 or 31

### Faith Explorers

December Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 am at the Stockholm Inn, 2420 Charles St., Rockford. Pastor Judith will facilitate a discussion of Lesson 4 on Angels in our community.

**Please join us!**



### Mariner December Meeting

Mariners will meet at Tavern on Clark on December 12 at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and a wonderful musical Christmas program presented by Sandy and Rodney Cain. Both were involved with music in the Harlem School District and are now retired and have graciously agreed to come and provide a program for us.

Mariners are inviting all to join us for lunch on that day. We hope to have a good sized group to enjoy the good food, company and beautiful program. Nettie Parker, Jim and Delores Hall would be happy to take your reservation. Lunch will be ordered from the menu, we have a room reserved so it will be a nice experience.

### Christmas Crafts at Maple Crest Care Center

4452 Squaw Prairie Rd, Belvidere

Saturday, December 16 @ 9:45-10:30 am

Come help us bring joy to our adopted family at Maple Crest Care Center. We will host a Christmas Craft Party and sing a few carols. All ages are invited to join us!



## Christmas Dinner



### Session and Deacon Christmas Dinner

The Session and Deacon Christmas Party will be held on Tuesday, December 19 at 6:30 pm at the Butterfly Club, 5426 E. Co. Rd X, Beloit, WI.

All outgoing and incoming officers (and their “plus one”) are invited!!

Beginning November 19, there will be a Gratitude Bag for each staff member down Fellowship Hall. Please take a moment to write a note and express your appreciation for all of their hard work and dedication to our church and church family. These will be given to our staff members on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at our Christmas Fellowship.

Thank you! The Music & Worship Committee



### The Hat and Mitten Tree

The Mission Committee has expanded the tree to include Adults and Children. Donations will go to the needy children of God at local schools, nursing homes, and homeless shelters.

*Please donate hats, mittens, and scarves to this worthy cause!*



**Calendar/Streamer Deadline for the January Calendar & Streamer will be Wednesday, December 13.**



### Offering Envelopes



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

### Christmas Joy Offering - December 17

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

- The Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions
- Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges
- Racial Ethnic Leadership Development



## Birthday Party for Jesus/Undecorating Party

On Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup>, 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.



### Holiday Church Office Hours:

**Office Closed** - Fri, Dec 22 – Tues, Dec 26

**Office Open** - Wed, Dec 27 - Fri, Dec 29

**Office Closed** - Mon, Jan 1 – Tue, Jan 2

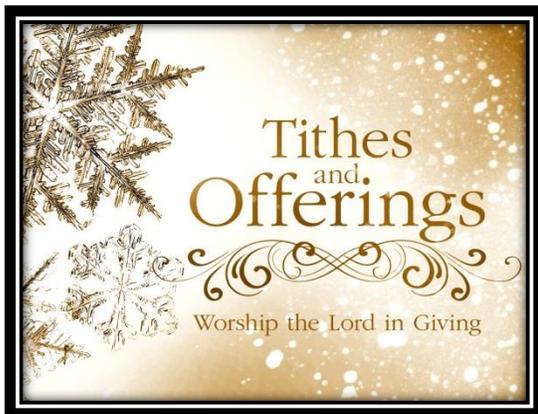
**Office Open** - Wed, Jan 3 – Fri, Jan 5

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to the Willow Creek Congregation from the staff,

*Stephanie Konen, Preschool Director/Teacher  
& Cleaning Service*

*Diane Van Vleet, Bookkeeper*

*Carol Nevicosi, Secretary*



### WCPC Operating Statistics

October reversed the trend of our not being able to meet our monthly expenses, for which we can be truly thankful. With the two months left in the current year, is it possible to eliminate our deficit spending for the current year? That would be worth a great big Hallelujah, wouldn't it? Thanks be to God!

**Thanks again for your continued support.**

### WCPC Operating Statistics

	October 2017	Year-to-Date
Income	14,716.28	122,961.11
Expenses	14,113.42	140,969.96
	602.86	(18,008.85)



**Children's Sunday School** (geared for children in grades PreK-5th) will take place every other Sunday.

No Classes in December – See you in 2018!

### **Adult Education Class**

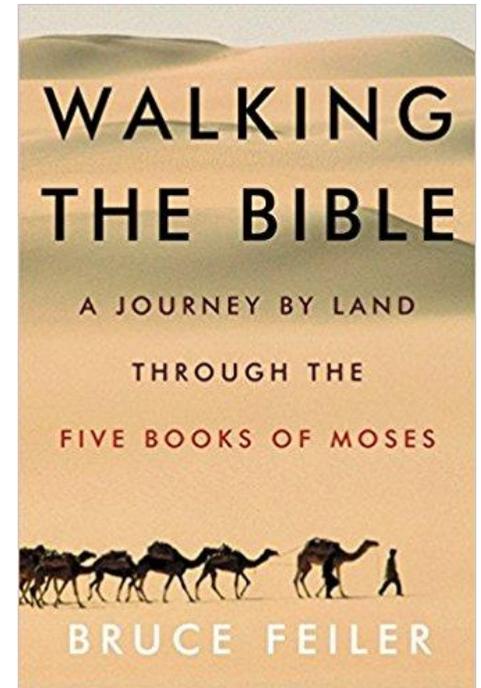
The Adult Education class will be watching and discussing another video series: Bruce Feiler's Walking the Bible. A journey by land through the 5 books of Moses. Both a heart-racing adventure and an uplifting quest, Walking the Bible presents one man's epic journey - by foot, jeep, rowboat, and camel - through the greatest stories ever told. From crossing the Red Sea to climbing Mount Sinai to touching the burning bush, Bruce Feiler's inspiring odyssey will forever change your view of history's most legendary events.

This same weekly class will be offered at three times during the week to accommodate different schedules. We hope to see you at one of the times!

Sunday mornings at 9:00-9:45 am

Wednesday evenings at 6:00-6:45 pm

Thursday mornings at 9:30-10:30 am



### **Youth Group Dates**



Sun, Dec. 10, 11:15 am-12:30 pm-Games with younger children while waiting for Santa

Sun, Dec.17, 11:30 am-1:30 pm-Christmas Party @ WC

Watch for an email about what to bring.

Annual Christmas Production



Along with Main Street Players of  
Boone County Present...

Featuring  
The Day Sisters.  
Mary & Holly

★ 12 Days

of

Christmas

Admission: \$5

★ Saturday, December 9th

★ 7 p.m. ★

Community Building

111 W. First St. Belvidere, IL

★ Celebrate Christmas

with us by donating

★ a new toy! ★

★ Proceeds to benefit Helping Hands Network

R.S.V.P.

Dick & Carolyn by Dec. 4  
815-975-4454



***Willow Creek Presbyterian Church***

***Sunday, December 10th***

**10:00 am Worship**

No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant  
w/costumes, props & special music

**11:00 am Fellowship**

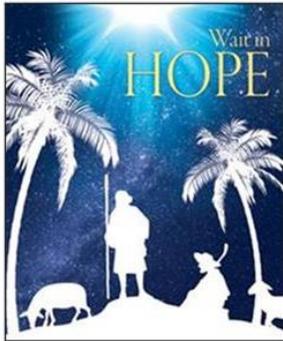
Annual Christmas Cookie Walk  
Children visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus  
Wassail & Cinnamon Rolls for all!

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church  
7300 Belvidere Road  
Caledonia  
(Belvidere Rd @ Rt 173)



# Willow Creek Presbyterian Church Presents the Season of Advent

## 1st Sunday of Advent



**Sunday, December 3, 10 am Worship**

Elizabeth LaGrande O'Leary-Contralto & Bill Zartman-Viola  
performing Appalachian Mountain Ballads by John Jacob Niles  
followed by Fellowship

**Sunday, December 10, 10 am**

No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant  
Special Trombone & Flute Duet by Abbie & Mandy Nelson  
followed by our 9th Annual Christmas Cookie Walk  
and a visit from Santa & Mrs. Claus

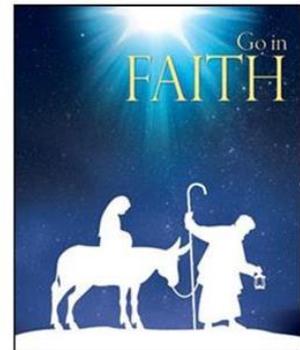
## 3rd Sunday of Advent



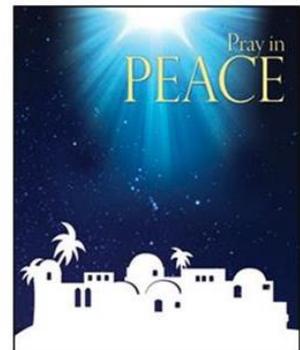
**Sunday, December 17, 10 am**

Christmas Choral Service  
followed by a special Bon Voyage Reception  
for our outgoing Music Director

## 2nd Sunday of Advent

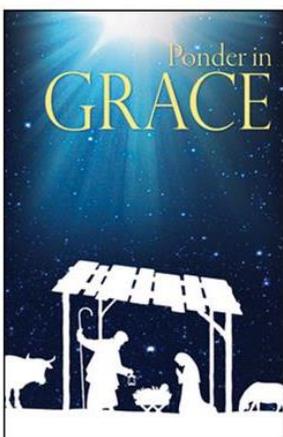


## 4th Sunday of Advent



**Sunday, December 24, 10 am Worship**  
with Special Music by Abbie and Mandy Nelson  
followed by Fellowship

## Christmas Eve



**Special Christmas Caroling event being  
planned for the afternoon**

**Sunday, December 24, 10 pm**  
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

## December 2017 All Church Calendar

Sun 12/3	8:30-9:15 am	Chancel & Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:45 am	<i>Walking the Bible-Mt. Moses (Library)</i>
	10:00 am	Worship with Communion by Intinction; First Sunday of Advent; Special Music performance of Appalachian Ballads written by John Jacob Niles
	11:00 am	Fellowship Hour
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
Tue 12/5	7:50-8:50 am	Pastor @ Washington Academy in Belvidere
	9:30 am	Faith Explores @ Stockholm Inn, 2420 Charles St., Rockford
Wed 12/6	6:00-6:45 pm	<i>Walking the Bible-Mt. Moses (Library)</i>
Thur 12/7	---	Poinsettia Delivery
	9:30-10:30 am	<i>Walking the Bible-Mt. Moses (Library)</i>
	5:30-8:30 pm	Argyle Room Reserved-Jodi Henderson
Sat 12/9	7:00 pm	Skiffers: "12 Days of Christmas" @ Community Building, 111 W. First Street, Belvidere (RSVP Dick & Carolyn Wheeler by 12-4 @ 815-975-9454)
Sun 12/10	8:30-9:30 am	Chancel & Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:45 am	<i>Walking the Bible-40 Years in the Desert (Library)</i>
	10:00 am	Worship with Communion by Intinction; Second Sunday of Advent; No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant followed by our 9 <sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Cookie Walk; Special Trombone & Flute Duet by Abbie & Mandy Nelson
	11:00 am	Annual Christmas Cookie Walk & Fellowship Hour
	11:15 am-12:30 pm	Youth Group-Games with younger children while they wait for Santa
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
	6:15-7:30 pm	Drum Circle
Mon 12/11	9:00 am	<b>Mission TEAM Meeting</b>
Tue 12/12	7:50-8:50 am	Pastor @ Washington Academy in Belvidere
	11:30	<i>Mariners @ Tavern on Clark (Officers Hosting)</i>
Wed 12/13	---	Deadline for January Calendar and Streamer
	6:00-6:45 pm	<i>Walking the Bible-40 Years in the Desert (Library)</i>
Thur 12/14	9:30-10:30 am	<i>Walking the Bible-40 Years in the Desert (Library)</i>
	5:30-8:30 pm	Argyle Room Reserved-Jodi Henderson
Sat 12/16	9:45 am	Christmas Crafts @ Maple Crest, 4452 Squaw Prairie Rd, Belvidere
Sun 12/17	8:30-9:30 am	Chancel & Young People's Choir Rehearsal
	9:00-9:45 am	<i>Walking the Bible-Closer to Canaan (Library)</i>
	10:00 am	Worship with Communion by Intinction; Third Sunday of Advent; Christmas Choral Service ; Christmas Joy Offering
	11:00 am	Special Bon Voyage Reception for Liz O'Leary during Fellowship
	11:30 am-1:30 pm	Youth Group @ WC for Christmas Party
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
Tue 12/19	7:50-8:50 am	Pastor @ Washington Academy in Belvidere
	8:00 am	<b>Buildings &amp; Grounds Meeting</b>
	6:30 pm	Christmas Party for Session & Deacons @ the Butterfly Club, 5426 E. Co Rd X, Beloit, WI
Wed 12/20	6:00-6:45 pm	<i>Walking the Bible-Closer to Canaan (Library)</i>

### December 2017 Calendar Continued

Thur 12/21	9:30-10:30 am	<i>Walking the Bible-Closer to Canaan(Library)</i>
	5:30-8:30 pm	Argyle Room Reserved-Jodi Henderson
Fri 12/22-1/5	---	No Preschool
Fri 12/22	---	Church Office Closed
Sun 12/24	10:00 am	Worship with Communion by Intinction; Fourth Sunday of Advent
	11:00 am	Fellowship Hour
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)
Christmas Eve	10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion by Intinction and Special Music
Mon 12/25-Tue 12/26		Church Office Closed
Thur 12/28	5:30-8:30 pm	Argyle Room Reserved-Jodi Henderson
Sun 12/31	10:00 am	Worship
	11:00 am	Fellowship Hour
	5:00-6:00 pm	AA Meeting (Sold on Sobriety)