

WILLOW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ARGYLE

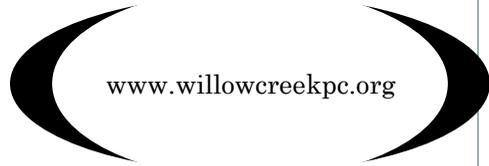
The Rev. Judith March Hardie

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*A Faith Community, Growing  
Together, Sharing The Love  
of Christ*



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Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle



# STREAMER

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## From the Pastor

July 2013

I have been working, as a part of my service to our presbytery through membership in the Committee on Ministry, with the Session of Bethany Church in Loves Park since Pastor Eric left in November. Recently, as I was praying for God's direction, both for our congregation and Bethany's, my husband interrupted me with the following article...and it just fits. We have been in touch with the author, and reprint the blog below with full permission:

Whenever a congregation goes looking for a new pastor, the first question on their minds when the committee interviews a new candidate is: Will this pastor grow our church?

I'm going to go ahead and answer that question right now: No, she will not. No amount of pastoral eloquence, organization, insightfulness, amicability, or charisma will take your congregation back to back to its glory days.

What then can your pastor do? She can make your board meetings longer with prayer and Bible study. She can mess with your sense of familiarity by changing the order of worship and the arrangement of the sanctuary. She can play those strange new songs and forget about your favorite old hymns. She can keep on playing those crusty old hymns instead of that hot new contemporary praise music. She can bug you incessantly about more frequent celebration of Communion. She can ignore your phone call because she's too busy praying. She can ruin your perfectly balanced budget with appeals for more funds to be allocated toward mission and outreach. She can take up your precious evenings with kooky new book studies and meditation groups. She can take up your precious weekends with exhaust-

*(Continued on page 2)*

ing volunteer projects. She can open your church building to the ugliest and meanest freaks in town, who show up at odd hours, beg for handouts, track muddy snow into the building, leave their cigarette butts in the parking lot, and spill their coffee on the carpet during their [Hurts/Hang-ups/Habits] Anonymous meetings. She can come off sounding like a Jesus freak evangelical, gushing on and on about the Bible and your personal relationship with God. She can come off sounding like a smells n' bells catholic, pontificating on and on about tradition and sacraments. She can come off sounding like a bleeding-heart liberal, prattling on and on about social justice and the need to constantly question old interpretations.

What can she do to grow your church? Nothing. There's nothing your pastor can do to make your church grow. She can't save your church. Your church already has a Savior and it's not her. She can push you. She can open doors. She can present you with opportunities. It's up to you to take advantage of them. She can plant seeds and water them. It's up to God to make them grow.

And what if that happens? What will growth look like? Will all those old, inactive members suddenly return? Will the pews be packed again? Will you need to start a second service and buy the lot next door in order to expand the parking lot? No. You might see a few new faces in the crowd. There won't be many of them. Some might stick around but most won't. Those who stay won't fit in with the old guard. They won't know about how you've always done it. They'll want to make changes of their own. Their new ideas will make you uncomfortable. Your church won't look or feel like it used to. You'll feel like you're losing control of this place that you've worked so hard to preserve. It will feel like your church is dying.

And that's just the thing. A growing church is a dying church. It has to be. It cannot be otherwise. The way to Easter Sunday goes through Good Friday. The way to the empty tomb goes through Golgotha. The way to resurrection goes through crucifixion. When Jesus told you to take up your cross and follow, did you expect it to lead anywhere else? What Jesus told us about himself is also true of churches: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it bears no fruit.

But what if it doesn't work? What if you let your pastor do all that crazy stuff and nobody new shows up? What if the church still goes under? What if all that time you spend studying the Bible, expanding your horizons, deepening your spiritual life, and serving your community turns out to be time wasted? What if it does?

Tell you what: if that's what happens, if you commit yourself to all this and still feel like it was a waste of time in the end, then maybe your church really needed to die.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Presby. Mtg.	11 Mariner's	12 Health Ministries meeting 3pm	13	14
15	16	17 Building & Grounds 9am	18 Preschool board meeting 1230pm	19	20	21 Fall Fest rummage sale
22	23 F & P meeting 9am	24 Martha/Ruth	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### **Thank You**

*“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God.” Acts 20:28*

What a pleasant surprise! Thank you all so much for the thoughtful patriot card in time for the 4th. Seeing all the names I grew up and learned from puts a smile on my face every time I look at it. I will wave as I fly over to Wisconsin in August. Thank you for your support also, Thank you for watching over me!

Annie

### **RESULTS OF JULY MISSION GIVING**

Harlem students are partnering with Habitat for Humanity to build the organization's first home in Machesney Park and we were able to play a small part in that project with our donation of \$63.00. We will report our August Mission Receipts for Stronghold next, and our Mission Recipient for September is our own Students In Need Fund. Please (and thank you) help us go the extra mile in supporting these local missions!

**Lost, found or forgotten:** there are several dishes, plates, and miscellaneous food carriers in the kitchen. We will put them on a table in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, September 15th. Those not claimed will be donated to the Fall Festival sales.

**Fellowship Hall Donations.** We appreciate *everyone* who offers refreshments for our fellowship time after church!! Thanks also for you're the donations placed in the basket! These money donations are used to offset the cost of the Free Trade Coffee and paper products supplied by the PW kitchen committee for all to use.

**Willow Creek Ringers** meet on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm. Beginning September 26th. However, we would like to begin a separate group of ringers for young people and beginning adults which would meet at 6:00pm on Thursdays. Are you curious? Interested? If so, come and join us! It's a great way to make friends, create music, & participate in the worship of our Lord. More info...contact Dianne Londo, dlondo48@londopiano.com or call 815-623-8512.

**As we gear up for starting school, let's gear up for nurturing our faith!** Beginning September 8<sup>th</sup>, Sunday school will meet from 9 – 9:45am. Come and see what there is to learn about your faith & your God. There will be enough love and nurture for everyone!

- Megan Rankin will teach in the nursery (infants –4 year olds) as they learn what it means to be a Child of God in the Household of God.
- April Rottman & Karli Rankin will teach the children (K-6th grades) using homemade curriculum to fully explore Bible stories using crafts, cooking, drama, video and more!
- Gary Wallace, Adam Finley, Denise Felton, and Dana Peterson will teach the youth (7th—12th grades) using the Nooma (Spirit) video curriculum in a discussion format.
- Pastor Judith will teach the adults (ages 19-99) using the Animate! video curriculum, an adult education course that explores central topics of Christianity. Pastor will provide a lesson of biblical/historical context to create an accessible, captivating exploration of big questions of the Christian faith designed to spark conversation .

**New Church Worship Time!** Beginning after Labor Day, we will start worship at **10am** in the sanctuary. We hope to have you and your family gather for worship and nurture as often as you can with your Willow Creek Family!

**PW Annual Fall Retreat...**All ladies are invited to the annual meeting, on Friday, September 27th, @ 10:00am to tour the Shelter Care Ministries Jubilee Center Maya House programs, which have been part of our Mission giving. After the tour we will have lunch at Stockholm Inn. We will carpool from the church at 9:30am. Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall and come out with us!

**First there were the Mariners, then came the Skiffers, next the Windjammers, and then the...???** We are starting up a young adult group (20's and 30's) on August 30th, 5:30 pm at the church. We will grill out for dinner. Please bring your own meat to grill and a dish to pass. Kids are welcome! After dinner, child care will be provided in the nursery so the adults can have a devotional and some discussion time. Our discussion will include the type of activities we would like to do as a group so please bring any brilliant ideas! Contact Maren Reid (815-978-5307) or Rebekah Landi (815-978-4982) with any questions. .

We are planning to have **Fall-Fest on September 21, 2013, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. !** The fairs have come and gone, the kids are back in school, the nights are getting cooler, leaves are just beginning to turn. Fall Fest is a PW sponsored event with proceeds helping to meet their mission commitments. The following are our needs: **Donations (everyone):** We are looking for gently used, clean household items, toys, electronics, clothing, coats, shoes, ect..., Items should be tagged with price/size and brought to the church beginning Sunday September 8th. If you have large items, you may call the church and let them know as we have volunteers to pick those items up. Don't forget to pick up a receipt for tax records.

**Bakers and crafters:** If you are a baker or crafter could we count on you for a donation to bake sale or craft booth? Craft items can be brought to the church after the 14th and baked goods can be brought during the week prior to the fall fest. **Lenders:** Much more table space is needed for the rummage sale than is available at the church, so if anyone has folding tables (both long and card tables) they would be willing to lend. Would be appreciated. Please label everything so we can return it to the right owner. If anyone has a canopy (sideless tent) we need several of them. They must be erected using weights as stakes won't work in the parking lot. **Helpers:** Able bodies are needed to do things like rope off entrance and exits, set up canopies tables etc....food booths starting at 7:30am on Saturday morning and help direct traffic. Ladies are needed to fill the tables with sale items. Cashiers and helper throughout the day are also needed .

The Worship & Music committee would like to help organize a **children's choir** to sing in worship occasionally. Rehearsals would be held on selected Sunday mornings leading up to singing during the worship service. If you think your child , or one you know, might be interested, call the church at 815-885-3455 or email [willocreekchrch@aol.com](mailto:willocreekchrch@aol.com).

**The need for school kits grows** each year as we combat poverty in our backyard and beyond Each church in Blackhawk Presbytery has been challenged to complete 30 school kits and one clean-up bucket to bring to the November Presbytery meeting at Stronghold on 11/12/13. More information is available at the CWS regional office (630)200-4572 or [jjones@cwsglobal.org](mailto:jjones@cwsglobal.org).

You are invited to attend the 2013 Area I PW Fall Mini Gathering at Harvard FPC on September 20th. Registration begins at 9:30am. Enjoy a continental breakfast! Pastor Jeff Borgerson will welcome us. Our speaker, Claire Brennecka will talk about the upcoming mission trip to Kenya (her fifth visit). Claire and three other members of Harvard First will experience a fascinating trip to Africa. Prepaid Reservation Deadline is Friday, September 13th, 2013 Cost—\$7.00

Send checks payable to Jill Sunday and mail to:  
 4640 Whitespire Dr.  
 Loves Park, IL. 61111. ((815)243-8080

**NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIIVEN AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE.** Please print name tags clearly.

**Willow Creek Presbyterian Church**

**Treasurer's Report**

Balance Sheet

July 31, 2013

**ASSETS**

**Current**

General Fund - Checking, Money Market, Paypal, Petty Cash	11,074.33
Memorial Fund	10,176.21
Session Fund - Gifts & Bequests	113,225.87

**Long-Term**

Building & Improvements	7,553.76
Mutual Funds -	
General - Virtus	18,686.72
Endowment - New Covenant	<u>296,383.73</u>
Total Assets	<u>457,100.62</u>

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

**Current**

Notes Payable	-
Mortgages Payable	-
Accrued Dedicated Obligations	6,736.06
Accrued Dedicated Missions	284.00
Accrued Pre-School	8,887.25
Accrued Payroll Taxes/403(b) Deferrals	890.32

**Long-Term**

Notes Payable	-
Mortgages Payable	-
Total Liabilities	16,797.63

**Equity**

Church Fund	<u>440,302.99</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	<u>457,100.62</u>