

STREAM

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle

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Caledonia, Illinois 61011

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February 2014

Message from the Pastor



This month many cards, flowers, chocolates and other gifts will be given and received in the name of love.

Tradition tells us that Valentine's Day is named after a Christian martyr, a Roman Catholic priest in the third century. Marriage for young persons had been outlawed in order that young men could more fully commit themselves to their military service. St. Valentine was arrested for continuing to hold secret Christian weddings. By the time he was put to death, he had converted several prison guards and their families to Christianity. And, when he found out that the daughter of his executioner was ill and had lost her sight, he prayed for-and she received- healing. Before his death he sent a little note of encouragement to her-- from your Valentine.

Today, Valentine's Day is a celebration of love that is somewhat over-commercialized. We hear about "falling in love," about "love at first sight," about "puppy love," and about "looking for love (in all the wrong places)." Movies tend to over-romanticize it. Reality TV often degrades it. Psychologists study it. As a church, we look for ways to find and show love, but do we really understand it?

What is love? Paul describes it this way: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:4-7). Jesus said it this way: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

"For God so loved the world..." One of the key ingredients in the biblical definition of love (and the one ingredient that's often lacking in worldly definitions) is self-sacrifice. True love—whether we're talking about our love for God, for others, or even for ourselves, love sacrifices for the good of the other person. This is how Christ has loved us. This is how we must love others. May God help us display this kind of love in our lives.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Judith

2013 Christmas Cookie Walk

We wish everybody could have seen how beautiful Fellowship Hall looked at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 7. The Christmas decorations were up and lit, the tables covered with red and green, with Legend Santa Centerpieces and tray after tray of beautifully decorated Christmas Cookies. Santa was there waiting to greet guests with candy canes as they arrived (well before the scheduled 9:00 a.m. opening) and the aroma of fresh baked cinnamon rolls was wafting from the kitchen. Of course, this did not magically happen. It took the work of many hands to bring it together. The cookie donations were even more beautiful and plentiful than last year and the "day of" volunteers of help were so appreciated. The combined total (WCPC Café, donated cookies and Barb Greenlee's hand knit donation) netted proceeds of \$1959.75. We were even able to share some of the cookies with nursing homes where the Youth Group went Caroling the following evening. A family in immediate need of assistance, having lost everything in a home fire, will benefit from this event. As in past years, a small portion will be set aside for emergency assistance for families in need throughout the year. Many, many thanks to all who helped make this year's cookie sale such a tremendous success. Your Christmas Cookie Walk Committee.

Health Ministries

You may already know that area hospitals have switched to computer record keeping, eliminating the need for paper charts. With that change in systems, your hospital of choice will not automatically have record of your church affiliation. And that means the hospital cannot notify us of your admission. If you want visits by the pastor or parish nurse, please make sure that you designate your specific church preference.

And perhaps you've already heard about ***The Daniel Plan, 40 Days to a Healthier Life*** by Pastor Rick Warren & The Daniel Plan Team? "With assistance from medical & fitness experts, Pastor Rick Warren and thousands of people from Saddleback Church started on a journey to transform their lives. The result: 15,000 people lost over 260,000 pounds in the first year. *But the changes in people's lives went far beyond the pounds they lost.*" *Perhaps* you are interested in achieving a healthy lifestyle and optimizing the "key 5 essentials of faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends," The study can be done in a 6-week session. The book, study guide, and journal are all available at a local book store or at www.Amazon.com.

Happy New Year! May God bless you & your families in 2014! Salud! To your health!

Party Time!!!

You are all invited to Betty Ralston's 90th birthday celebration party in Wesley Willow's party room (the original bldg. on the east side) on February 15 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Betty has requested no gifts, saying that your presence is gift enough.

Burns Supper – Youth Group Activity

The 156th (consecutive) Annual Burns Banquet will be held at the Hoffman House on January 25, 2014. The traditional evening will consist of dinner (of course), guest speaker, Atty. Scott Boyd, pipers, dancers and Robbie Burns "himself". This year we are pleased to have a drawing in which one lucky attendee will win two tickets to the **Celtic Woman Concert** scheduled for May 1, 2014 at the Coronado Theater (see below). More information on the banquet is available at www.rockfordburnsclub.com or by phone, 815/505-4659. For many years the Willow Creek Youth Group has operated the cloak room at this event as a fund raiser.

Community News of Interest

The Celtic Woman is an all-female Irish musical ensemble with a repertoire that ranges from traditional Celtic tunes to modern songs. They soon will be touring the U.S. for the fourth time. The group has recently released it's sixth album and has remained as #1 on the World Charts for several years. They have been described as being the "Riverdance for the voice". We are fortunate that they have agreed to return to Rockford for the second time and will be performing at the Coronado Theater on May 1. Tickets start at around \$80.00 but considerable savings can be realized by purchasing in a group. Anyone interested can get a group rate by contacting Donna Hamilton at 815/885-3902. Look for the Celtic Woman Poster in Fellowship Hall.

Fourth Quarter Mission Results

From Dave Ensminger, Mission Committee Chairman: I am proud to announce that we received \$606.00 in donations for the Sheltered Care Ministries in the quarter broken out as follows:

October	\$228.00	Jubilee
November	\$201.00	Maya House
December	\$177.00	Housing

Thanks to all who participated and we look forward to our upcoming Mission projects in 2014 starting with Students in Need for the month of January.

2013 Kits Challenge Report

On November 12, 32 school kits were taken to the Presbytery meeting at Stronghold. The Elgin Church had issued a challenge to all the churches in Blackhawk Presbytery to prepare at least 30 school kits. This is the report of what Blackhawk Presbytery responded with: School Kits: 1733, Hygiene Kits: 706, Emergency Clean-up Buckets: 126, Baby Care Kits: 32, with a total of 2597 kits. Willow Creek had completed a clean-up bucket earlier in the year. The school supplies were purchased with PW funds. All of these kits go to Church World Service and are sent to wherever there is a need. Many of them came back to Illinois in the past year where there was flooding and other emergencies.

Thank You Notes

From Laura Edwards, Client Services for Presbyterian Foundation: Thank you for your continued support and investment in New Covenant Funds. Merry Christmas and happy New Year!

From Sue Wilson and the children, staff and parents at First Step Learning, Inc.: Dear Willow Creek Presbyterian Church Members, Thank you so much for the hats and gloves for our kids! The excitement from the children and appreciation of the parents was overwhelming!! We are all very grateful.

From Lee Pickett, Treasurer of the WCPC-PW Coordinating Team: As we determined to disband our association with Presbyterian Women we also needed to close the books and disperse the funds in our Treasury. By mutual agreement we decided to send an extra \$200.00 to many of the missions we have supported over the years. This money was accumulated by the generous donations of time, talent and funds from the entire congregation. We have received thank-you notes from Remedies, Goldie B. Floberg Center, Kemmerer Village, Lifescape Community Services, Inc., Sheltercare (\$200 each for Jubilee Center, Maya's House and Housing Program), Menaul School, Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center and Carpenter's Place. A thank-you letter was also received from Paulson's Agriculture Museum of Argyle for decorative plates donated to help them raise money. All of these letters have been placed on the table under the bulletin board. Thank you for the many years of support.

Treasurer's Report

December '13: Income=\$19,628	Year End: Income= \$139,905
Expenses = \$12,062	Expenses = \$153,656
Month's Variance \$7,566	2013 Year End Variance (13,751)

Calendar

Sunday, January 26: 3rd Sunday after Epiphany – S.S. 9:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday January 28: Martha-Ruth Circle – 9:30 a.m. @ Stockholm Inn
Sunday, February 2: 4th Sunday after Epiphany- S.S. 9:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.
Sunday, February 9 – 5th. Sunday after Epiphany- S.S. 9:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, February 15: Worship & Music Committee Mtg. 9:00 a.m.
Sunday, February 16: 6th. Sunday after Epiphany- S.S. 9:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 18: Pastor Judith is out of the office
Sunday, February 23: 7th
Sunday after Epiphany- S.S. 9:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.

NOTE: Committee and group chairpeople. Please stop by the office and put your meeting and/or activity dates on the calendar.

Information for the March Streamer is due by February 21. Please drop it off or email it to the church office.