



# STREAMER

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle

7300 Belvidere Road

Caledonia, Illinois 61011

815-885-3455

May 2020

## *“A Faith Community, Growing Together, Sharing the love of Christ”*

*Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you... Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid...*

*Rise let us be on our way. (John 14: 27, 31)*

When I was interviewed by the Session back in October of 2018, we did not really know each other. First meetings are always a bit awkward. Each of us assessing, as best as we could, if my gifts and what Willow Creek needed fit.

Well, either thank or blame those Session members who decided to take a chance on me. For the past 18 months, I have enjoyed and appreciated working with you.

As I have said but is worth repeating: Pastor Judith left this church in good shape. During my time here, there have been very few real issues. This church knows how to pull together. Helping us are two wonderful people in the office: Carol who keeps us organized and on task and Diane who, along with Loren Buffington, keeps a watchful eye on our finances. Please thank them regularly.

We have been through a Mission Study process and elected a hard-working PNC who continues to actively look for the next “Called and Installed” minister. The church’s finances remain steady although need to improve (see PNC update letter). The church’s fellowship and connective tissue remains strong. The music ministry of Tom Andrew, the Choir, Liz O’Leary, Dan Holmes, Lucas Greenlee, and the Monroe sisters help us encounter the living God.

Soon, both the Church and the Manse will receive a new roof. Plans are afoot to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church’s founding. Our mission outreaches to the Boone County Fair, Habitat for Humanity and Maple Crest have good solid participation. Our children’s “Change for Change” Sunday has a new focus and is being met with wonderful generosity. Much needed wells will be dug and trees planted. This church has not missed a beat.

One of my hidden gifts is knowing when it is time for me to say “Goodbye”.

When the PNC began to seriously look at candidates, it was time for me to begin to look for my next call. I found one in my home state of Wisconsin.

God is always on the move, calling each of us into the places where our gifts are needed.

So it is time. My work here has come to an end.

So filled with sadness (that our time is ending), excitement (for what God has it store for us both) and gratitude (for what we have shared), I am telling you that my last time leading worship will be on Sunday May 24<sup>th</sup>. I hope to go on Retreat beginning Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup>.

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## Continuation of Pastor Letter from First Page

I have enjoyed being your Pastor. You have taught me, scolded me, studied with me, appreciated me, and worked beside me. I would have never gone to PYT if it was not for this church, or eaten a Hamball or heard as much bagpipe music in worship (delightful). I have cried with, listened to, played four corners with, sang with, written notes to, ministered with, brought communion with, worshipped with and prayed with and for you all.

I am grateful for the many people who are actively praying for this church on Wednesdays at noon. I urge you to continue this practice even when I am no longer among you. I am honored to have worked with the members of Session and the Deacon Board. My thanks, as well, goes to Pastor Claire Brennecka, our Blackhawk Presbytery COM rep. She has been a big help to me and to this church during my time here.

As always, goodbyes are hard. Saying a good “Goodbye” to people I have come to love and respect is part and parcel of an interim minister’s calling. We have a whole month to say our “goodbyes”. Feel free to call, text or have a socially appropriate yet physically distant chat.

But let me be clear, **after June 1**, I am no longer your Pastor so your calls will need to be directed to Carol in the office, to Maren Reid-Clerk of Session or to any of our capable Deacons.

I will continue to hold you in my heart and my prayers.  
I can’t wait to see what God has in store for you next.

Blessings. I wish you all peace, (Pastor) Glen

As the Scottish say:

May the road rise up tae meet ye.  
May the wind be aye at yer back.  
May the sun shine down on yer face.  
The rains fall soft upon yer fields.  
An until we meet again,  
may God hold ye i the palm o God’s hand.



**In person Worship Services are canceled for now.**

**Updates? Check your email.**

**Worship Services can be found online at: <https://willowcreekpc.org/sermons>**

PASTOR  
NOMINATING  
COMMITTEE

Dear members of Willow Creek,

The search for the next Pastor of Willow Creek has not slowed despite the recent disruption to our everyday lives. Thanks to technology, we've been able to connect personally and visually with applicants, watch sermons and



meet regularly. We remain very confident that the Pastor that meets the needs and resources of Willow Creek is out there. Sometimes, searching for a new pastor takes a while. This requires us to be both patient and prayerful. To accelerate our search, we've begun seeking alternate places to post our position, in addition to the standard practice of posting on the PC USA website.

In all transparency, we have been surprised to discover that the Pastor's package that we can offer right now has been a deal breaker to every quality candidate we have found. This has also limited the number of Pastors who have even considered us. For us on the PNC, it has been a considerable "awakening" to see the disparity between what we can offer versus the Presbytery norm.

As such, members of the PNC have increased (a few doubled) our contributions to the church. If you are inspired to follow the PNC's lead, please let Diane know that you would like to increase your pledge so that we are able to responsibly increase our offer. Each increase in our giving will make a difference. We are grateful and immensely appreciative of every offering you make and want to assure you we will continue our search based on the resources we have to offer.

Willow Creek has many gifts and we proudly share this with all who seek us out. Our church is a vibrant and caring family. Every one of you is a gift!! Rest assured, we will find the right Pastor to nurture and move our church family forward into the future. Please continue to pray for us and for the next Pastor as we continue our search.

On behalf of the PNC, we send blessings and love to you all!

Marie Wiersema

Miss a Worship service?  
Check out recordings on  
Willow Creek's new YouTube channel!



*Come Learn, Worship and Share  
with us every Sunday*

*Adult  
Sunday School*



9:00am

*Worship*

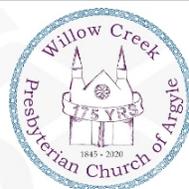


10:00am

*Fellowship*



11:00am



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search: Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle



Thank you for the cards. Enjoyed the homemade cards from the children.

Prayers for everyone to stay well during this trying time.

Jeane Shallenberger

Dear Willow Creek Church Family,  
This has been a tough year for my family. I want to thank you for all the support you have given us during this difficult time. We appreciate all the visits that Pastor Glen and the deacons made to dad when he was at the hospital and in the nursing home. We appreciate all of you who sent cards as well. The visits and cards really lifted his spirits in those last days of his life. Blessings to all of you!

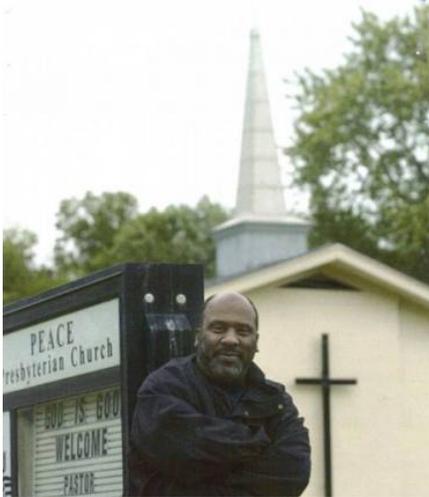
Sincerely,  
Brenda Benning



Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle  
@willowcreekpc

@willowcreekpcargyle  
Willow Creek PC of Argyle  
We are a faith community growing together sharing the love of Christ. We gather to worship, deepen our bonds, and grow in Christ serving others.

Check out the latest photos and events on our Facebook and Instagram pages!  
<https://www.facebook.com/willowcreekpc>  
<https://www.instagram.com/willowcreekpcargyle/>



Through the leadership of the Rev. Wayne Steele, Peace Presbyterian Church is very active in the Newburg community in Louisville and Mid-Kentucky Presbytery. (Contributed photo)

## COVID-19's impact on black Presbyterian churches *by Gail Strange | Presbyterian News Service*

LOUISVILLE — It is said, “When America gets a cold, the African American community gets pneumonia.”

The COVID-19 pandemic is proving that to be true. As the virus spreads across the country, it appears that it is impacting African Americans at a disproportionately high rate. In hot spots like New York, Detroit, New Orleans, and Chicago, blacks are dying at alarmingly high rates.

According to [APM Research Lab](#), as of Monday more than 23,000 Americans had died of COVID-19. Data about the racial background of those who died was available for only 35% of all deaths.

While black Americans represent 13% of those living in places releasing data by race, they have suffered 32% of all known COVID-19 deaths in those places.

APM's research further showed that:

- Dramatic inequities exist in numerous places across the Midwest: In Wisconsin, blacks are 5.5 times more likely to die of COVID-19 than their population share, followed by Michigan, 3.6 times more likely, and in Illinois, 3.3 times more likely. In Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, the ratio is 2.4, while it's 2.3 in Chicago and 2.0 in Louisiana.
- Of the 12 states and four localities examined, Minnesota is the only one that does not see a disproportionate mortality burden for its black residents.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to expose disparities and inequities in the nation's health care system and socioeconomic status, but it also shines a spotlight on systemic racism and poverty, two issues that have plagued this country for centuries.

The coronavirus crisis is impacting every aspect of the black community including the church. For African Americans the church has been an integral part of life for centuries. The church has been key for [American Descendants of Slavery](#) (ADOS) through the inhumane treatment of slavery to Reconstruction, Jim Crow and the civil rights movement. ADOS have relied on their faith and their church to sustain them in perilous times.

Now in the age of the COVID-19 pandemic and social isolation, how is the black Presbyterian church faring?

## **Continuation of 'When America gets a cold, the African American community gets pneumonia' from prior page**

The Rev. Wayne Steele, Jr. is the pastor of Peace Presbyterian Church, a church with nearly 100 members in Louisville, Kentucky. Steele has been the pastor for 20 of the 60 years of the church's existence. "For our African American churches, we don't have money that's stored up," Steele said. "We don't have nice endowments set aside for rainy days."

"It's nice that the government, the church, the presbyteries and the synods are giving loans, but the truth of the matter is with the bottom line that many churches have right now, it's going to be difficult to pay back a loan to help us survive right now," he said.

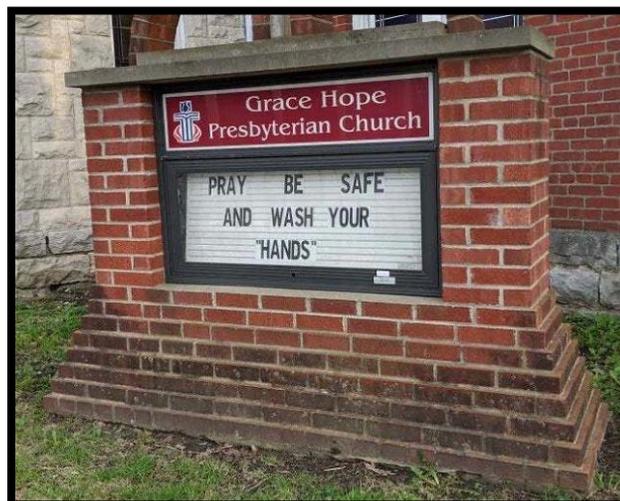
"I'm very concerned that for a lot of our African American pastors, this calling that we have, is our only source of income," he said. "This is our full-time job."

Peace Church live streams on Sunday morning. "Thanks be to God," Steele said, that the church had started online giving before the pandemic. "For the African American community, online giving is a new way of giving to the church and we don't often gravitate to change as quickly as others, so this becomes a new process," he said. The age of the congregation also impacts online giving, he said. While many African American churches have young adults familiar with technology, it's the senior citizens that carry the church financially.

"Last week we mailed all members a personal letter talking about the love Jesus," he said. "Not only did we talk about their spiritual responsibility to the church, but their financial responsibility as well."

An offering envelope was enclosed with the letter. "Hopefully they will take advantage of that," he said. "I've heard some good positive responses from members promising to mail their contributions." The church is open on Mondays and has made accommodations for members to drop a check off while practicing social distancing.

For now, the congregation has decided to maintain the staff for April but will be assessing that situation every month. And while finances may be an issue, Peace Presbyterian continues to serve its members and the community. Currently the church offers online Bible study and is exploring opportunities to offer online youth ministries. Additionally, the church continues to serve the community through its food pantry ministry.



If you would like to contribute to Change for Change or 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, please mail your offering check to the church and indicate in the "memo" to which account (Change for Change or 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) to direct your offering.

### "Change for Change Sunday"

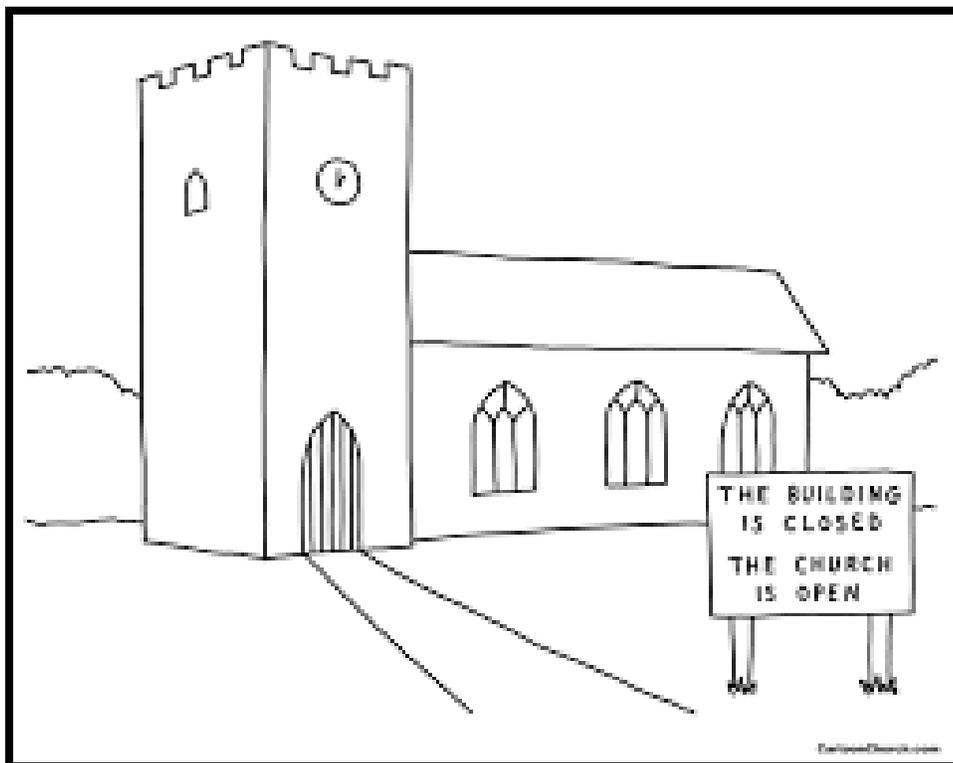
Each Third Sunday of the month is "Change for Change Sunday". The children as part of the worship service will be collecting change from the congregation so that their chosen Mission projects can be fully funded.

We have pledged to raise these our children in the faith. The children have taken the lead in this mission project. They have given us the opportunity to show, surround and saturate them in the Gospel value of generosity. **Thank you for your support!**



**Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle was begun 175 years ago.** On September 27th, we will be celebrating our history and our heritage. In order to defray the cost of this magnificent moment, on the first Sunday of each month, we will be receiving (in a Scottish Tam) a "freewill offering". The suggested monthly donation is \$1.75/person.

Thank you,  
Session and the 175th Planning Committee





## WCPC Operating Statistics

March finds us with expenses exceeding revenues as winter hangs on and a nasty coronavirus affects our normal lives at every turn. We can be thankful for your continued support in keeping our offerings at a favorable level. For that we extend a heartfelt thanks to all that are able and willing to provide that support. Stay safe, and look out for each other when you can.

**Thank you for your faithful support.**

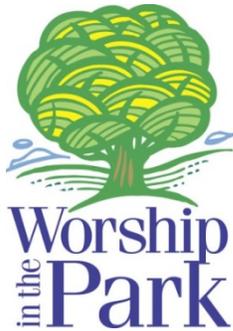
### WCPC Operating Statistics

	March 2020	Year-to-Date
Income	10,828.16	33,538.85
Expenses	13,555.59	43,560.41
Excess/(Deficit)	<b>(2,727.43)</b>	<b>(10,021.56)</b>

**WILLOW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
STATEMENT OF INCOME and EXPENSE  
Actual vs Budget  
FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED March 31, 2020

	Budget	Actual	Variance
<b>REVENUES:</b>			
Contributions - General	37,584	29,698	(7,886)
Contributions - Special	187	5	(182)
Other Income	1,475	2,936	1,461
Endowment	900	900	-
School & Event	250	-	(250)
Total Revenue	40,396	33,539	(6,857)
<b>EXPENSES:</b>			
MINISTRY OF:			
Personnel	26,118	25,083	1,035
Christian Ed & Youth	1,100	11	1,089
Music & Worship	1,433	641	792
Member & Stewardship	168	246	(78)
Building & Grounds	11,021	14,477	(3,456)
Session	3,685	1,922	1,763
Deacons	50	-	50
Missions - Budgeted	1,734	1,180	554
- Unbudgeted	-	-	-
Total Expense	45,309	43,560	1,749
<b>Change in cash from operations</b>	<b>(4,913)</b>	<b>(10,021)</b>	<b>(5,108)</b>
<b>OTHER:</b>			
Dedicated Accounts, Pre-School & Liabilities	-	(4,793)	4,793
Net Cash Transfers To/(From) Investments	-	-	-
<b>Change in cash since January 1, 2020</b>	<b>(4,913)</b>	<b>(5,228)</b>	<b>(315)</b>

Please mark your calendar for these upcoming events:



**Worship in the Park**  
**Sunday, July 12**

**Dan Holmes** will be with us for Special Music on the following Sundays:

May 31

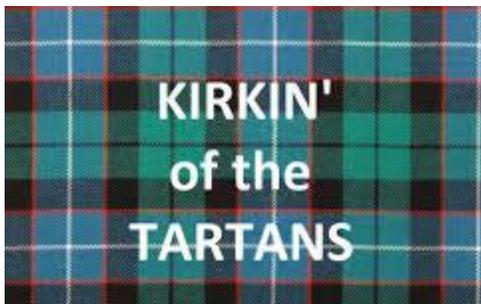
July 12 (Worship in the Park)

August 16

September 13



At this time, we are still planning on doing summer camp the week of July 13th. However, we may have to cancel it due to COVID-19. Also, Stronghold is having trouble getting counselors due to travel restrictions at this time, so they may have to cancel some of their camps, including traveling day camps. When we know more information or have made a final decision, we will let you know. Thank you for understanding!  
Christian Education Committee



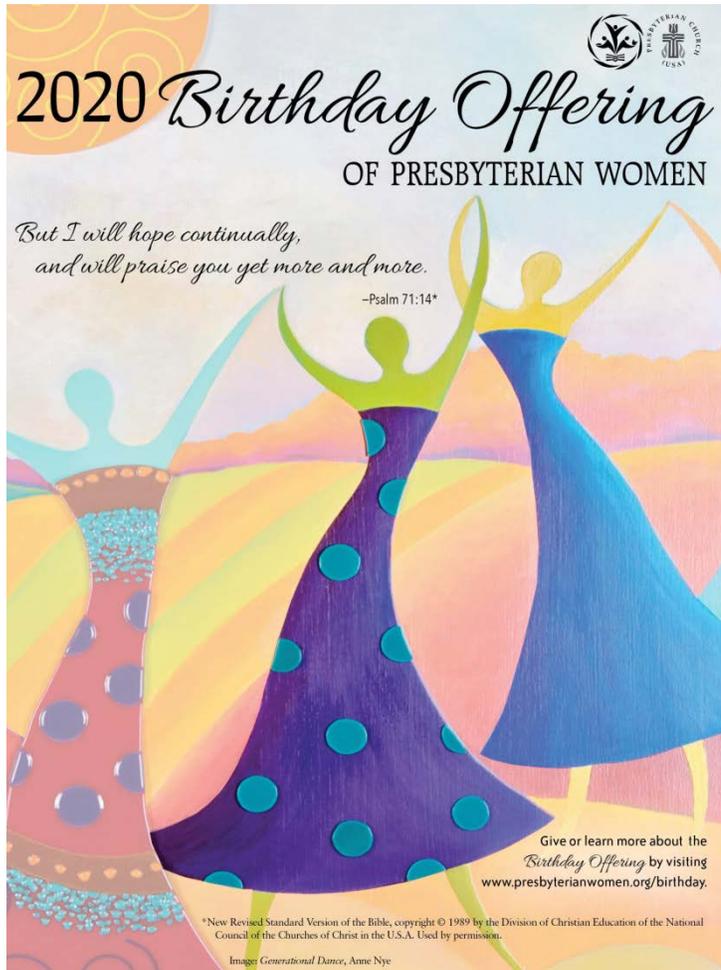
**Kirkin & 175<sup>th</sup> Celebration**  
**Sunday, September 27th**



The **175th Anniversary Celebration Planning Committee** would like all members of the congregation, including past members, to feel welcome in planning our 175th-anniversary celebration scheduled for September. Specifically, we are looking for significant stories, historic events by year/month and/or artifacts as well as individuals willing to be interviewed to share memories of their experiences and family in the church. Please contact Lucas Greenlee, Tom Andrew and Annie Picken at [events@willowcreekpc.org](mailto:events@willowcreekpc.org), or sign up in the back of the fellowship hall to be interviewed between now and June 28th.

**Let us celebrate together our wonderful history!**

## Upcoming May/June Missions



The poster features a vibrant, abstract illustration of three stylized figures in colorful dresses (purple with blue polka dots, blue, and yellow) with their arms raised in a celebratory gesture. The background is a mix of warm colors like orange, yellow, and pink. In the top right corner, there are two circular logos: one for the Presbyterian Church USA and another for the Presbyterian Women's organization.

**2020 Birthday Offering**  
OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

*But I will hope continually,  
and will praise you yet more and more.*  
—Psalm 71:14\*

Give or learn more about the  
*Birthday Offering* by visiting  
[www.presbyterianwomen.org/birthday](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/birthday).

\*New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.  
Images: Generational Dance, Anne Nye

### Presbyterian Women Birthday Offering

The Birthday Offering is a Presbyterian Women Offering. Received in the spring each year, it gives women a tangible way to celebrate the blessings in their lives. The Birthday Offering funds up to five projects each year, in amounts of \$75,000 to \$150,000 each. The recipients are selected before the offering is received, so grant amounts depend on the gifts received.

April 13 - May 31, 2020

## Pentecost

The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world.

**God,  
from my youth  
you have  
taught me.**

— Psalm 71:17

*Building a Life of Faith*



### Pentecost Offering

Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit remains with us still, connecting us with the church of the past, continuing to inspire the church of today, and pointing us to the church of the future. Each year, this celebration is marked by receiving the Pentecost Offering which nurtures the faith of those who are the church to come; children, youth, and young adults.