



# STREAM

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle  
7300 Belvidere Road  
Caledonia, Illinois 61011  
815-885-3455

December 2020

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

One of my favorite Advent hymns is *The Canticle of the Turning*, a creative rendition of the Magnificat (Mary’s Song) which is found in Luke 1:46 - 55. These are the words of Mary as she contemplates the miracle that she is carrying the Son of God, the Savior of the World. In the hymn version, this line is repeated again and again: “the world is about to turn”. This line perfectly captures the spirit of Mary’s words from the Magnificat, the spirit of hope and certainty that something new is dawning.

If there was ever a moment we needed that spirit, it’s now!

Certainly, this will be a different Advent and Christmas, just as so many things have been different this year. There is sadness about that, and that’s ok. We’ll miss seeing loved ones and celebrating the season together.

And also, there is possibility in 2020’s version of Advent. This year more than ever we have the space to walk the season slowly, instead of sprinting from event to event. This year we have the chance to contemplate what it must have been like for Mary, for Joseph, for the shepherds and magi and all who eagerly greeted the newborn Jesus - they had been waiting their whole lives, their families had been waiting generations for this embodiment of hope. As we have longed for the pandemic to end, we have learned about the waiting of our ancestors, and can better understand their faith and joy in the midst of longing.

I do believe the world is about to turn. The many tensions we have carried - pandemic, politics, protests and any number of personal stresses - may or may not be alleviated soon. I’m not sure that Christmas brings relief from our many earthly burdens. But I am sure of this: the season of Advent is an invitation to practice re-orienting those burdens as we walk slowly toward the beloved, humble manger. The world is about to turn not because circumstances are certain to change, but because we all choose to open our hearts once again to Christ’s surprising arrival among us, and that openness will certainly change the world.

This year, we will walk through Advent aided by the work of a group of pastors and artists called *A Sanctified Art* ([sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)). They invite us into an exploration of the Advent theme “**those who dream**” from the opening lines of Psalm 126: “When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like *those who dream*.” They have creatively approached each of the weeks of Advent (hope, peace, joy and love) through the lens of this theme. They offer visual art and poetry throughout our Advent devotions to encourage us to dream as those confident that the world is about to turn.

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**Pastor Lauren's letter continued from first page:**

I think some of their words and art may prove comforting and even familiar - and some of it may be evocative, even provocative. It may be a different approach to Advent, but this year deserves a different treatment of the traditions.

I hope that you will walk with me as we turn our hearts toward the star beckoning us to Bethlehem, open to all of the ways God wants to prepare us because the world is indeed about to turn.

Advent Blessings,  
Pastor Lauren



Please keep Annie Picken and her family in your prayers as she leaves for her third deployment with the National Guard. She expects to return next summer.

We will miss Annie greatly - she serves the church and community in countless ways, and while we are grateful for her selfless service to our country, we look forward to the day she returns safely to us. Among other things, she has been an invaluable member of the team who makes remote worship possible week after week. We will miss her gifts and talents as a video editor and all around tech expert, as well as her friendship and joyful presence.

We will let you know of an address you can send cards to as soon as Annie has one.



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

*Stephanie Konen, Cleaning Service*

*Diane Van Vleet, Bookkeeper*

*Carol Nevicosi, Secretary*

*Tom Andrew, Organist*

*Liz O'Leary, Music Director*

*Pastor Lauren Patrus-Betzel*



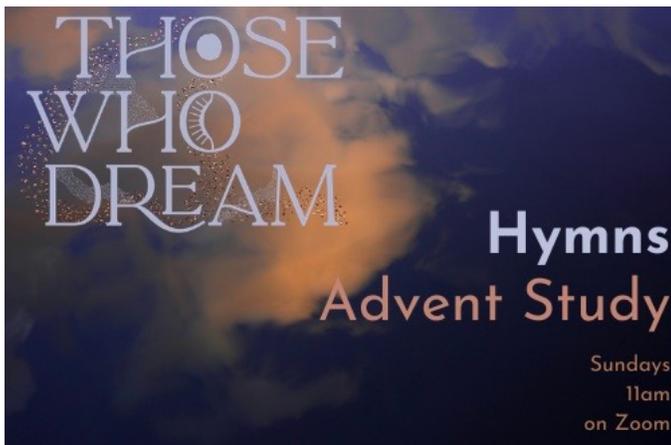
We will continue **remote worship** through Advent. **Advent kits**, including candles for an at home Advent wreath, have been sent home (but you can still get one! Contact the church office if you would like one) so you can participate at home.

**Christmas Eve** worship will also be remote this year. We are excited to share a very special worship service with you that uses scripture and beloved songs to walk us through the Christmas story. Watch and see the familiar faces as our church family leads us through readings and music. This will also be a great opportunity to see the beautiful decorations around the church! The Christmas Eve service will be available online on December 24th.



We will have a special service on **December 27th**. A recording will still be provided, but it will be a short, simple, contemplative opportunity as we continue to celebrate the miracle of Christ's birth. More information will be sent out via the weekly updates email.

Join Pastor Lauren for an **Advent study** on favorite Advent and Christmas hymns! Each week of



Advent, we will explore our theme (those who dream...) through a hymn or two, and learn about the history of the words and music as well as the Scripture themes. This study will be held on Zoom at 11am on Sunday mornings (11/29, 12/6, 12/13 & 12/20). The Zoom link for the study will be in your updates email each week, and if you would like to connect by phone, let the church office know and we will give you the numbers to call.

Do you miss having a **hymnal**? We have decided to lend our hymnals out so you can fully participate in worship and the Advent study, and simply enjoy having this familiar book in hand. We will keep track of who borrows a hymnal, and once the pandemic is over, you will have an opportunity to return your hymnal. If you would like to borrow a hymnal, call or email Pastor Lauren or the church office and we will get it to you.





Dear WCPC,  
 Thanks for all the cards, get well and thinking of you, cookies, phone calls and offer of help. All of which was much appreciated during all these trying months.  
 Blessings,  
 Lee Pickett

A **HUGE THANK YOU** to all of the volunteers who worked to decorate our church for Advent! And thank you to the Music & Worship Committee for coming up with a safe way for us to decorate this year, and to Kim Reid and Katherine Ralston for their leadership.



**Thank you for your service!** The following officers have reached the end of their term, and we thank them with great gratitude for all the ways they have led our church family.

Elders:  
 Dave Ensminger  
 Lucas Greenlee

Deacons:  
 Janet Ensminger (resigned class of 2021)

We usually celebrate these officers at a joint Session and Diaconate meeting in December - we are unable to celebrate at this time, but look forward to doing so in the future!

Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle  
 @willowcreekpc

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/>

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

**YouTube**

Come Learn, Worship and Share with us every Sunday

9:00am 10:00am 11:00am

search: Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle



Hello Willow Creek Friends,  
I was, as I'm sure many of you were, very disappointed to have to stop worshipping in person. However, we are continuing to worship by taping, and I have faith that I can sing to you live again soon.

Our Christmas Eve Service will be a Lessons and Carols format, which will be a fun change for us. I hope to use many talented members of the Willow Creek family, to make some Christmas Music for you.

Here is what to expect during December:

December 6 Lucas Greenlee, pipes  
December 13 Dan Holmes, voice and guitar  
December 20 Handbell Choir  
December 24 Church Musicians

As we progress during the year, please give me your feedback on the music. Did you really like someone? This will help me when I continue planning.

Have a safe holiday. Next year will be better!

Children's Sunday School via Zoom @ 10:30 am  
December 6

CHILDREN'S  
Sunday School



At this time WCPC services will be remote. The service will be recorded and posted on the church's

webpage: [www.willowcreekpc.org](http://www.willowcreekpc.org)

The January Streamer and Calendar deadline is  
Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>  
(to accommodate the holiday season)





Included in our decorations this year is our **Kemmerer Village Tree!** You are invited to send a Christmas card to your church family that we will display on this tree. If you like, you may also include a donation to Kemmerer Village, just include 'Kemmerer Village' in memo of your donation check.

We will highlight this tree in our Christmas Eve worship service, and you will have the chance to see it on December 13th at our outdoor Christmas Extravaganza!

### Food Collection

We are once again collecting for the Harlem-Roscoe Fire Department's Annual Food Drive, they are looking for pop tarts, cereal bars, mac and cheese, etc..

**Please bring your non-perisable donation to the December 13<sup>th</sup> Christmas Extravaganza event.**



### Baby Closet Needs

Can you help stock the Baby Angel Closet? You can bring your donations during the Christmas Extravaganza Drive-Thru on Dec. 13th, or arrange another time to drop them off with the church office.

Current needs:

- Diapers of sizes 3 thru 6 (no pullups, please) (this is our biggest need right now!)
- Baby Wipes
- Children's books, especially board books for very young children
- Baby wash
- Diaper rash cream
- Bibs
- Bottles (8 oz and 4 oz)
- Clothing - especially for little girls (all sizes needed) and for boys (especially need 24 months or 2T)

We had 5 clients last week and that takes a lot to fill the bags for them. Warm clothing is needed at this time of the year. Anything that is given is most appreciated. The clients are so thankful when they get the bag of items that they need.

Thank you for caring, Jim and Delores Hall



## Christmas Extravaganza Sunday, December 13th

Join us on Sunday, December 13th from 1pm -2pm for our **drive-thru Christmas Extravaganza!** You can pick up your beloved **Christmas cookies** (an order form will be available soon in your weekly updates email, or you can call the church office to make an order), see our **Kemmerer Village Christmas Tree**, and bring **donations for the Baby Angel closet and the Harlem-Roscoe Fire Department's Annual Food Drive!** There will be a surprise for the kids, too. Monies raised from the sale of the cookies will be put into the Families in Need Fund.

This year's Christmas Extravaganza has become a donation extravaganza, as we want to continue our generous church's many traditions of giving throughout the season as safely as possible during covid.

**We need cookies!** Would you be willing to donate **homemade cookies** to this wonderful tradition? It would be amazing if you could bake 3 or more dozen, but we'll take any number. Cookies should be brought to the church Saturday, Dec. 12th between 1pm and 2pm. If you plan to bring cookies, please let the church office know an approximate amount (815-885-3455 or [willowcreekchrch@aol.com](mailto:willowcreekchrch@aol.com)) so we can plan appropriately.

Keep watch for more updates to this year's version of the Christmas Extravaganza!



## WCPC Operating Statistics

As we once again enter the season for giving thanks, we are ever thankful for each other as we continue keeping the church in good financial standing. Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other as we face the corona virus in our daily lives.

**Thank you again for your support.  
Stay safe and God Bless everyone.**



	WCPC Operating Statistics	
	October 2020	Year-to-Date
Income	14,735.64	128,890.04
Expenses	10,184.17	110,290.02
Excess/(Deficit)	<u>4,551.47</u>	<u>18,600.02</u>



During this pandemic time, the church office is closed. Please email the church office at [willowcreekchrch@aol.com](mailto:willowcreekchrch@aol.com).

In case of emergency members should contact:  
Pastor Lauren Patrus-Betzel 678-230-7549 or  
Maren Reid (Clerk of Session) 815-978-5307 or  
Jim Hall (Chairperson of Deacons) 815-633-1784

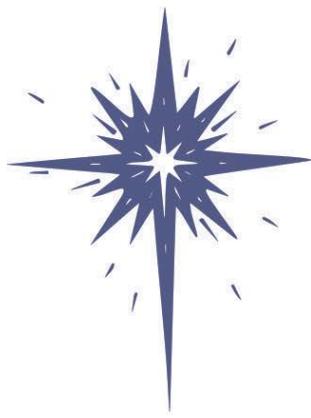
## "Change for Change Sunday"

Each Second Sunday of the month will be "Change for Change Sunday". We have pledged to raise 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.

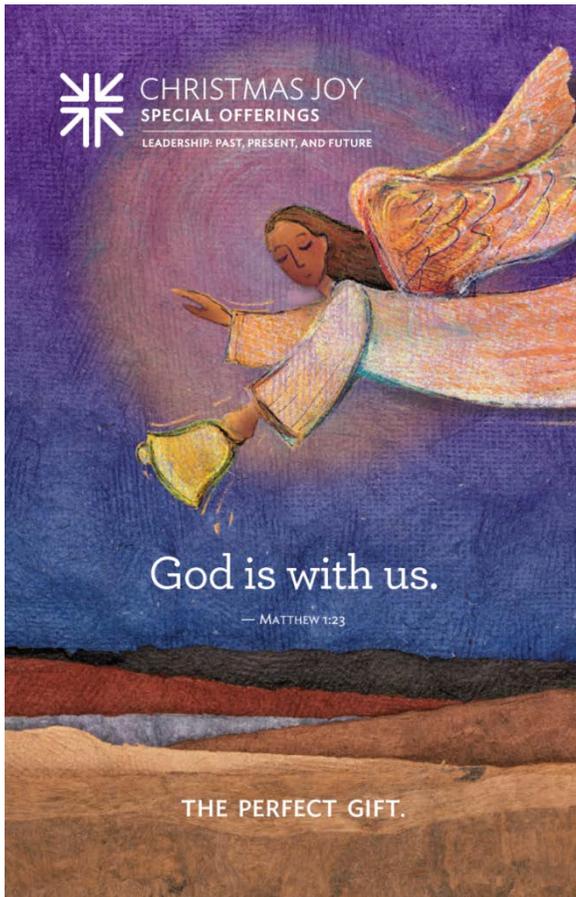
**Please mail your offering check to the church and indicate in the "memo" Change for Change. Thank you for your support!**



**The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** will be postponed until we can gather in full again. If you would like to contribute to the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, **please mail your offering check to the church and indicate in the "memo" 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.**



# Christmas Joy OFFERING



The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God. Even as we support our current and former church leaders through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color — offering students the means for a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come.

**Please mail your donations to the church and indicate “Christmas Joy Offering” in memo.**

## **Blackhawk Presbytery’s Advent Gift for You**

We are excited to offer to all our churches the unique perspectives of 26 Blackhawk pastors and lay leaders as they reflect on the 2020 Advent journey. Based on the four candles representing "Hope", "Peace", "Joy" and "Love", each of these volunteers will be featured in a brief, 3-4 minute video posted to the [Presbytery's YouTube channel](#). A new reflection is available

every day, from November 29 - December 25. The organizer of this project, Rev. Catherine Martin, is "hopeful that it will bless many of our congregations in the Presbytery, as well as give you a bit of a relief from all that you are being called to do during this unique time in history!"

