

The Westkirk Presbyterian Church

Shepherd

Volume 23 No. 12 December 2008

Remember the Joy!

ESV Luke 2:10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people."

Last December, on Christmas Eve, over 260 people (many guests and visitors), gathered here at Westkirk for our Christmas Eve candlelight service. It was a glorious time of worship. I didn't expect that many people, our parking lot was in tatters and the weather was unusually cold. But, the cars were lined up all the way around the circle to Colby Woods Drive. It was so exciting!

Well, as one of our Christmas hymns finished up (with Jason Jones playing the trumpet), my then-three year old, Nathanael, from the front row announced for scores in every direction to hear, 'I don't like it so loud!' Now, isn't that just like kids these days? Always complaining about the volume of the grown-ups music? It's all a matter of perspective, I guess.

Now that Thanksgiving is behind us and Christmas time is here, may we all, while we have a chance, take a deep breath, look at our schedules, and vow to make time celebrating the birth of Christ our top priority this year. Let's focus on Jesus and family, limit the stress that comes with extra holiday events, ignore the consumerism, spend reasonably, be patient standing in line and driving in traffic, and allow the season of hope, joy and love, fill us with the wonder we once experienced as children. Then when Christmas Eve comes, we will all be able to go home, relax, and say, this was the best Christmas in a long, long time. A Christmas filled with reminders of the good news of great joy that is for all people!

Pastor Michael





The Session

Moderator - Michael Mudlaff

Class of 2008

- George De Graaf
- Chuck Heitbrink
- Ron Long
- Kevin Riggins

Class of 2009

- Kevin Heer
- Marv Nugteren
- Kirk Yentes

Class of 2010

- Rick Eyerly
- Jerry Tuinstra
- Melinda Turnbull

Clerk of Session - Robin Riggins

Treasurer - Chris Brown

Assistant Treasurer - Aaron Pieper

Commission ChairPersons

- Christian Education - Jerry Tuinstra
- Evangelism/Fellowship - Van Harden
- House and Grounds - Ron Long
- Missions - George De Graaf
- Stewardship - Chuck Heitbrink
- Worship - Kevin Riggins

Board of Deacons

Class of 2008

- Barb Asman
- Dianne Glanzer
- Bette Jones
- Fran Nugteren
- Kris Thompson

Class of 2009

- Marilyn Long
- Marilyn McCulloch
- John Schwien
- Sandy Tuinstra
- Sherie Whitehead

Class of 2010

- Linda Aldrich
- Jeff Brady
- Kay Cunitz
- Cynthia Fisher
- Eric Wickemeyer



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|----------|------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Tammy Deviney | 16 | Harold & JoAnne Cook |
| 1 | Steve Dolezal | 17 | Mike & Karen Grimmus |
| 1 | Cora Springer | 18 | Paul & Wendy Brisbois |
| 4 | Evva Dawdy | 19 | Butch & Linda Campfield |
| 4 | Nicolas Hoepker | 20 | Marty & Ellen Kinnaird |
| 4 | Audrey Willcox | 26 | Dick & Irene Reed |
| 6 | Marilyn Lanham | 26 | Jerry & Sandy Tuinstra |
| 8 | *Emma Brown | 26 | Brent & Donna Willcox |
| 9 | Barry Johnson | 30 | Greg & Nancy Schmidt |
| 15 | Chuck Heitbrink | | |
| 17 | Casey Phipps | | |
| 17 | Judy Schmidt | | |
| 18 | Nick Benson | | |
| 18 | *Cole Weir | | |
| 19 | *Kaitlin Mogle | | |
| 20 | *Andrew Ackeland | | |
| 20 | Wanita Oswalt | | |
| 24 | Denise Harden | | |
| 27 | Margaret Caster | | |
| 28 | *Natalie Hansen | | |
| 28 | Kevin Heer | | |
| 28 | Charlene North | | |
| 29 | *Tyler Mogle | | |
| 29 | Darlene Wilson | | |
| 30 | *Keely Dake | | |
| 31 | *Eric Brown | | |
- *Youth Member

Dinner Concert a Hit

A full house of happy diners enjoyed a delicious gourmet meal, then sat back and absorbed the beauty of Advent music. It was the festive evening of the Westkirk Choir's Advent Dinner Concert. Most guests spoke of getting on the list for next year! The Choir wishes to thank all who supported this year's event.



199 Shoe Boxes!

This year Westkirk members and friends prepared 199 Shoe Boxes for Operation Christmas Child. These boxes may be the only Christmas gifts that some children receive this year. What a blessing that we can provide help and continue to *Know Christ and Make Him Known*.



The Bulletin Board

December Activities – See related articles in this issue.

Monday	12/1	Commissions meeting , 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	12/2	Women's Bible Study (Mudlaff) , 9:00 a.m. Stephen Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	12/3	WOW , supper 5:45 p.m.; Choir , 7:30 p.m.
Thursday	12/4	Financial Peace University , 6:30 p.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry , 7:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study (Yentes) 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	12/6	Cookie Walk/Christmas Store , 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	12/7	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	12/8	Omega HouseKirk , 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	12/9	Women's Bible Study (Mudlaff) , 9:00 a.m. New Light meeting , 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	12/10	WOW , supper 5:45 p.m.; Children's Program , 6:30; Choir , 7:30
Thursday	12/11	Dorcas Circle , 1:00 p.m. Financial Peace University , 6:30 p.m. Women's Bible Study (Yentes) 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	12/13	Choir Dinner Concert , Fellowship 6:00 p.m., Dinner 6:30 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	12/14	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service/Communion , 10:30 a.m. <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m. Sunday Night at the Kirk , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	12/15	Session/Deacons Meeting , 7:00 p.m. January Shepherd articles due
Tuesday	12/16	Women's Bible Study (Mudlaff) , 9:00 a.m. Bagpipers Luncheon , 1:00 p.m., Okoboji Grill Stephen Ministry training , 6:30 p.m. No Clan HouseKirk in December
Wednesday	12/17	WOW , supper 5:15 p.m.; Caroling , 6:00; Choir , 7:30 p.m.
Thursday	12/18	Women's Bible Study (Yentes) 7:00 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	12/21	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. Youth Christmas Sweater Party , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	12/22	Omega HouseKirk , 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	12/23	New Light meeting , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	12/24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service , 5:30 p.m.
Thursday	12/25	Christmas Day , Office closed
Friday/Sat.	12/26-27	Youth Shop & Ski trip , Minneapolis * * * * *
Sunday	12/28	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m.; Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. <i>No New Life</i>



December Dorcas Circle

Thursday, December 11 all ladies of the church and their guests are invited to come to Dorcas Circle at 1:00 p.m. in the Hospitality Room. **Lou Heitbrink** will be leading us in a faith lesson called "Confronting Evil" from the DVD series *Faith Lessons of the Promised Land: Crossroads of the World*. Dessert and beverages will be served by **Lillian Nash and Dorothy Olsen**. Please join us for faith, food, and fellowship. For additional information, please call **Moderator Karen Admussen (253-0330)**.

Yes, We'll Have Poinsettias

There will be beautiful red blooms to adorn the Sanctuary for Christmas. Please watch the Sunday bulletin for order forms. All requests must be returned no later than **December 7**. Forms and payment may be left in the special basket at the Welcome Center.

We will have 6 ½" pots available for \$15 each. Red is the color offered this year. Be sure to act quickly. Reserve your plant to display in the sanctuary beginning December 14 through Christmas Eve. Then you may take it home or to a friend.

Plants may be dedicated in memory of a loved one, in honor of a special event, or in honor of a friend, relative, or a ministry. Just indicate this on your order form and return it with payment by the 7th. If you require additional information, please contact **Audrene Hansen, 243-1679**.



Two Holiday Events—One Day

December 6, 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

COOKIE WALK

Westkirk will hold the third annual Cookie Walk in the Great Hall. For those wishing to bake cookies, there is a sign-up sheet in the Hospitality Room. A donation of a few dozen of each kind of cookie you bake is requested. Help is also needed on the day of the sale. If you can volunteer or have questions, please contact Nyleve Taylor (324-3252) or Regi Donaldson (276-6263). This event is a fund-raiser for Westkirk Youth.

CHRISTMAS STORE

A sale of pre-owned Christmas items will be held in the Hospitality Room. In addition to regular Christmas decorations, we will be offering Christmas sweat shirts, scarves, jewelry, craft and music items, wrapping materials, paper goods, and what have you. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this sale. Offer to deliver their items with yours to the church. This event is a fund-raiser for the Deacons Fund, used to help others.

**PLEASE DELIVER YOUR COOKIES AND CHRISTMAS ITEMS TO THE CHURCH ON
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 5:00-8:00 PM**



Covenant Sunday

What a moving sight on November 23! Member families and friends came forward to place their 2009 Stewardship Pledge cards in a basket so that Pastor Mudlaff could dedicate all pledges together.

If you were unable to bring or mail your pledge by the 23rd, please send it to the church office, **marked Attention Treasurer** as soon as possible. The Elders need our pledge information in order to prepare a realistic budget for the coming year.

Food Pantry Donations

The Deacons thank you for your faithfulness in contributing to the area food pantry. November gifts amounted to 288 grocery items and \$480 in cash. You help bring joy to many needy families in our community.



**Mark Your Calendar
now for the
Annual Meeting of the
Congregation of
Westkirk Presbyterian
Church
January 25, 2009**

Advent at Westkirk

This Advent season, we will celebrate with a sermon series on the Mothers of Jesus, the special women in the life of our Savior. There will be related Scripture readings along with joyous Christmas music every week.

Each of the four Sundays of Advent we will feature a Westkirk family lighting the Advent candle and reading a message.

Please make plans with your family now to attend our traditional **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**. Worship will begin at **5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24**. Come and celebrate the birth of our Savior Christ Jesus with your Westkirk family. And, invite your friends to come along!

During this happy, holy season, special music is planned for each Sunday and Christmas Eve:

December 7 Organ/Piano Prelude
Larry Kussatz, Debra Liljedahl

All Is Well
Kids of the Kingdom

When I Pray
Stephanie Bratney, Soprano

December 14 *Night of the Father's Love*
Born To Be The Bread
Westkirk Choir

December 21 *We Three Kings*
Just Like You Promised
Kids Own Worship

What Shall We Sing for the Child?
Five Tenors and the Preacher
David & Debra Liljedahl. Piano

December 24 Traditional Carols

Also during Advent, a spiritual, *Savior Child*, will be sung by Kevin Riggins.

Westkirk Welcomes New Members

These new members were welcomed into the Westkirk family on August 17 and November 16. Following the morning worship service on the 16th, a Welcome Luncheon was held for them, hosted by the Elders to present them to their respective Deacons.

Please take time to introduce yourselves to these new family members.

Just as a reminder for all our members, please make sure to wear your name tags. It really helps all of us remember names.



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Put the Word in Your Mind in '09

Did you set any New Year's resolutions last year? Do you even remember what they were? One of the keys to making sure that goals become a reality is to find a group of people with a similar goal and work on it together. We want to make memorizing scripture a priority in 2009 and there's no better way to accomplish our goal than to pursue it together as a church family. Whether you're a first grader or a senior saint, we're going to encourage you to memorize a verse each week throughout coming year.

Why is memorizing Scripture so essential to the Christian life? Rev. John Piper, of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN, offers a few compelling reasons:

1. Conformity to Christ. Paul wrote that *"we all, . . . beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another"* (2 Cor. 3:18). If we would be changed into Christ-likeness we must steadily see him. This happens in the word. *"The Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord"* (1 Sam. 3:21). Bible memorization has the effect of making our gaze on Jesus steadier and clearer.

2. Daily Triumph over Sin. *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. . . . I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."* (Ps. 119:9, 11). Paul said that we must *"by the Spirit . . . put to death the [sinful] deeds of the body"* (Rom. 8:13). The one piece of armor used to kill is the *"sword of the Spirit"* which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). As sin lures the body into sinful action, we call to mind a Christ-revealing word of Scripture and slay the temptation with the superior worth and beauty of Christ over what sin offers.

3. Communicating the Gospel to Unbelievers. Opportunities to share the gospel come when we do not have the Bible in hand. Actual verses of the Bible have their own penetrating power. And when they come from our heart, as well as from the Book, the witness is given that they are precious enough to learn. We should all be able to sum up the gospel under four main headings (1) God's holiness/law/glory; 2) man's sin/rebellion/disobedience; 3) Christ's death for sinners; 4) the free gift of life by faith. Learn a verse or two relating to each of these, and be ready in season and out of season to share them.

Prayerfully consider joining us on this church-wide journey to memorize God's Word in 2009. We'd also like to encourage you to purchase The NIV Fighter Verse Memory Pack (\$5.00) at the Welcome Center to help you along the way. The pack includes more than 500 verses, a handbook, a review verse sleeve, and a binder for storage. We pray you'll join us in becoming armed with the Word of God!

Fantastic Women's Retreat!!! January 16-17, 2009

Unveiled. Unmasked. Get Real. Live transformed.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:18.

Ladies, you're invited to a "mask-erade" ball! Many things hinder Christ's call to us to live authentically before God and others. We can spend so much energy keeping up appearances and hiding behind carefully constructed masks. But with unveiled faces, we reflect the Lord's glory.

Join with fellow sisters in Christ for the third annual women's retreat hosted by Meredith Drive Reformed Church, and get ready to Get Real. Bring your friends, neighbors, co-workers, teen daughters, aunts, mothers, and grandmothers—this is a retreat for women of all ages! Retreat location: The Bridge, a campus of Meredith Drive Reformed Church, 10025 NW 62nd Avenue, Johnston, IA. Registration: \$55/per person, December 1—January 5. Includes Friday night refreshments, breakfast and lunch on Saturday. For more information, go to www.meredithdrive.org or talk to **Karen Admussen or Sasha Mudlaff**.

Presenting . . .

THE SCHEVES

Mark, Erica, Madeline, Lydia and Anna

WELCOME HOME SCHEVES! Mark and Erica have recently returned to Iowa after two years living and working in the Indianapolis, Indiana area. They both are Iowa natives and were eager to return to family, church (Westkirk) and friends.

Mark grew up on a farm in north Lucas County, Iowa, with two brothers and one sister. He graduated from SE Warren High School. He then enrolled in Central College in Pella, IA.

Erica Hayes grew up on the family farm at Parkersburg, Iowa, with two sisters and graduated from Aplington-Parkersburg High School. She then enrolled at Central College in Pella, IA.

You now know where they met. They were acquainted as college freshmen, but a closer relationship developed when, in their sophomore year, they both went to England on the study abroad program. Upon their return to Central, their feelings for one another grew and soon after graduating in the spring of 2000, they were married. Mark's degrees were in religion and business. Erica received a BA in psychology. Mark found employment with Allied Insurance here in Des Moines and Erica used her degree of psychology at Lutheran Social Services of Iowa until becoming a full time mom..

They started searching on the internet for a church home. Mark found the Westkirk site and liked what he read so they visited and were impressed with the interaction among the different age groups, content and style of worship and music. Mark was raised in the Catholic Church and Erica Baptist. Worship experiences with good, traditional music, which included the organ, made them feel at home. They expressed a great appreciation for Larry's organ playing.

First daughter Madeline was born in 2002 and in 2003 the three Scheves went to Boston. There Mark spent a year in grad school at Boston College, seeking a masters in political philosophy. They returned to Iowa in 2004 where he again worked for Allied Insurance and after searching Ankeny for a closer church to attend, they returned to Westkirk.

Second daughter, Lydia, was born in 2005, and in 2006 they were sent by Allied to work as Sales Director in Indiana. After two years in Noblesville, Indiana, they have returned, a family of five because one year old Anna is their Hoosier "keepsake."

John and I enjoyed visiting with the Scheves in their lovely home and meeting Madeline, Lydia, and Anna, the three beautiful and sweet, blond daughters, who were on their best behavior.

Erica is homeschooling Madeline not only in scholastics but also starting to introduce her to the piano. We were blessed to hear a sample of Madeline's talent when she played a perfect rendition of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" for us. Erica was an accompanist during her college years and wants her girls to appreciate and enjoy making music.

Theirs is an active household! Erica helps with the three and four year olds on Wednesday nights at the Kirk. Mark teaches the Financial Peace University class on Thursday evenings and helps out with the new Sunday School class. When asked about hobbies they both responded, "football (Hawkeye fans) and reading." Mark enjoys non-fiction (history and religion), Erica likes novels and is reading Little House on the Prairie to the girls. Mark added hunting (he was looking forward to hunting with his brothers that weekend).

Again we say, "Welcome Home to your Westkirk family, Mark and Erica. We need your talent and enthusiasm for involvement in our mission to know Christ and make Him known."



. . . by Carolyn Chenoweth



We are so thankful for the safe return of the **Mission Team** as well as the great experience they encountered at Back2Back Ministry in Monterey, Mexico. We are planning a church get together so that they may share their experiences. They have pictures, videos and lots of comments which they are just eager to share. Keep a watch in the upcoming bulletins, etc. for a date to join us.

Dan Marvin with International Messengers is also willing to share the ministry he is involved with in teaching English in Hungary. The group that went there for 10 days had an exciting time and could see

God's hand involved in the people there as they interacted with them. We Praise God for these missionaries, because that is indeed what they are, in bringing Christ to people through these English camps. We are also planning a Wednesday evening where Dan wants you to experience some of the local food. It should be an exciting evening.. Keep watch for this.

Ruth Harbor had an excellent fund-raising banquet in November and had the largest number of supporters turn out for a great evening. One of the original founders of Ruth Harbor shared her vision that she and some others had which God made into reality. There was a personal testimony from one of the young mothers as well as the husband who also made a decision to follow through in keeping his responsibility of a father. God is definitely using Mark Mc Dougal and the staff at Ruth Harbor to make an impact on many expectant mothers, not only with a presentation of the Gospel, but also in helping them in their respective family situations. Continue to pray for this ministry. Thank you for your support.

Hope Ministries has received their first delivery of warm clothing which you have so graciously supplied. Thanks to **Cynthia Fisher** for transporting them. Scan away Hunger plates will be passed out in December and you may have seen them at the local food chains and participated. There are so many opportunities at Hope Ministries to provide assistance during this time of year. Thank you for your participation.

For those who are involved in a HouseKirk, you may be looking for ways to serve some of the local ministries. Freedom for Youth would like to have a group serve a dinner, so please check with **Sherie Whitehead** as to any information you might need as well as a date that works out best with you.

FFY. Dave and Karen Eggert are gearing up for the annual Children of Abraham Conference to be held after Christmas and involves training internationals to serve God in their home countries. It is quite a step of faith for some of these students to attend, and then to share the gospel in face of many dangers and persecution. Pray for them.

Finally, we want to mention the Samaritan's Purse **Operation Christmas Child**. We began this in July, and were gratified with the response at that time. Now in November we have been amazed at more boxes. Thanks to **Patty Liittschwager and Nicholas** who had two parties to fill boxes, to **Darlene Denison** for wrapping many boxes, to the ladies at **Dorcas Circle** who brought miscellaneous items and filled 15-20 more boxes. At this writing, we are not sure of the total, but we must be near the 200 mark. **Somer and Brad Gillett** will go to Minneapolis to help pack the larger boxes for final shipment to their destinations. Please pray for all of the children who will receive boxes, that their lives will be changed with the realization that GOD LOVES THEM, and they will be open to the gospel message.

Thank You for your part in supporting all of these ministries. Should you have any questions regarding the Missions that we support, please see any one of the Mission Commission members. They are George & Gail De Graaf, Cynthia Fisher, Somer Gillett, Dan Marvin, Rus & Julie Norem, Wendy Reed, Jerry & Diane Skinner, Alvin & Lois Lundgren Stecker, Larry & Sherie Whitehead. . . . *George De Graaf, Chair*



The Story of Stephen Ministry

The Christmas season is full of wonderful stories of Christmases past, not to mention, the greatest story of all – the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Stephen Ministry has a story to tell as well. Where did it all begin? It dates back to 1974, with Kenneth C. Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri. Fresh out of seminary, his strengths and heart were in caregiving ministry, and he was looking forward to making a positive impact on his congregation and community by providing pastoral care to all those experiencing divorce, grief, hospitalization, discouragement, and other life difficulties.

Very quickly though, he found that the needs for care by far exceeded that which he alone could provide. He faced one of a pastor's greatest frustrations: seeing people slipping through the cracks because their urgent needs were going unmet. In November of 1974, he discussed the situation with two seminary friends over a cup of coffee. The conversation turned to Ephesians 4 and "equipping the saints for the work of ministry." Haugk realized that God didn't intend for a pastor to monopolize ministry. Rather, God gave all his people gifts for ministry and one of his roles as pastor was to equip others to use their gifts in ministry.

Haugk returned to St. Louis with a plan. In the coming months he recruited nine lay people who had the gifts and heart to do caring ministry. He then used his combined backgrounds in theology and psychology to develop a training program in Christian caregiving. By March 1975, the nine were commissioned as "Stephen Ministers." Their first care receivers included a widower, a blind person, a young woman with cancer, a truck driver forced to retire early, and an inactive member struggling with faith issues. The impact? Tune in next month to hear, as they say, the rest of the story!

Thank You Note . . .

*Hey Guys – Thanks so much for your package! I was in dire need of snacks and gum – and that cocoa! The note was great and the whole thing really brightened my day! Thanks,
Caitlin [Miller]*



What's a felucca? A loose woolen cloak worn by Arab men? An agricultural tool, like a pickaxe, used in India? A small coastal boat used in the Mediterranean? Where would you look to find the correct meaning or description of a word like felucca? A dictionary, right? Sure, dictionaries typically help us to discover the true meaning of a word.

What about a word like **Christmas**? The dictionary says, "The annual festival of the Christian church commemorating the birth of Jesus, celebrated on December 25 and now generally observed as a legal holiday and an occasion for exchanging gifts." Well, the dictionary definition helps, but it doesn't give many details or much information. To find the real meaning of Christmas we will need to dig deeper.

The true meaning of Christmas easily escapes many of us while we're stuffing stockings, wrapping gifts, and replacing the batteries in our Christmas sweaters, but not this year! I'd like to challenge you to not lose sight of the simplicity of Christmas amidst the complexity of the season. Take time to share family devotions, sing Christmas carols and read scripture together, or do whatever you need to do to make sure that Christ is at the forefront of your mind this Christmas season.

Are you a high school student? If not, then this isn't for you. If so, please consider joining us for one, or all, of these upcoming gatherings for 9th-12th grade students throughout December:

- 12/7 *New Life*, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Westkirk
Topic: *Christmas Around the World*
- 12/14 *New Life*, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Westkirk
Topic: *Giving to Others*
- 12/21 Christmas Sweater Party. 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Westkirk
Topic: *The First Christmas*
- 12/26-27 Shop & Ski Trip, Minneapolis, MN.
Call Pastor Steve to sign-up today!!
- 12/28 *No New Life*

Children's Ministry

Westkirk has many opportunities this month for your children to learn about God, worship him with song, and share the good news with others:

December 3: Dress rehearsal for Christmas Play. It is very important that everyone involved in the play be there.

December 7: Kids of the Kingdom sing during the worship service.

December 10: WOW Dinner Theatre presented by the children and BLAST. What does the Armor of God have to do with Christmas? Come find out! Jerry & Sandy Tuinstra wrote an original play that includes armor that the children have made, Christmas carols, and the Christmas story. Dinner will be available in the Great Hall from 5:45-6:30 p.m. followed by the Christmas Program in the sanctuary. Dessert will be served in the Hospitality Room following the Christmas Play. **Note to parents:** Children involved in the play need to be finished eating and in the lounge by 6:15 p.m. in order to put on costumes..

December 14: Sunday Night at the Kirk, 6:30 p.m. Did you know that there is children's programming during Sunday Night at the Kirk? Children ages 3-12 are dismissed after the worship songs to learn about Talking with God. In the past six months we have discussed why we pray, what is prayer, and how we pray. Last month we acted out the story of the centurion who told Jesus about his sick servant, and we learned that we pray with faith. On December 14 we will look at another way we pray.

December 17: All ages are invited to eat a light supper at church from 5:15-6:00 p.m. followed by caroling at several senior centers where members of our church live. At 6:15 p.m. we will sing at Silvercrest. Then at 6:45 we will go to the health center at Deerfield. At 7:15 p.m. we will conclude our caroling at The Village at Legacy Point. There will be no classes that evening so everyone can participate in this family fun annual tradition.

December 21: Kids Own Worship will sing during the worship service.

We appreciate all your cell phone and recycling donations. Last month we earned \$20 for the children's ministry and also helped be good stewards of our environment. Keep bringing in your used cell phones and put them in my office. Any aluminum cans, plastic bottles and glass can be put in the two garbage cans located in the west wing entrance. Thank you!

May your Christmas season be a time of magnifying the Lord like never before. He has brought us a savior whose light shines within us and gives us peace, hope, and love!

... Karen Admussen, Director of Children's Ministry

Thank You Very Much!

Wonderful sounds, sights and smells filled the Great Hall when the Westkirk family and friends gathered on **Thanksgiving Day**. What a great feast as we enjoyed the warm fellowship of our "family."

Sincere thanks to **Larry Kussatz and Chuck Heitbrink** for organizing and preparing this annual dinner for the eleventh time. And thanks to their helpers **Terry and Kris Thompson, John Schwien, Barb Earles and Dean Teeter**. **Kevin, Rachel, Madeline, and Meredith Heer** served the guests. On hand to set tables on Thanksgiving Eve were **Gail and George De Graaf, Lou Heitbrink and Marillyn McCullouch**.

Then came **Greening of the Kirk**. A hard working crew gathered on Sunday afternoon, November 23 to decorate Westkirk for Advent. A big Thank You to **Audrene Hansen** who organized the project and to all who helped make things look bright and beautiful to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

The Shepherd

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Bob Schmadeke, Genevieve Stogdill
Joan Thompson

Staff of Westkirk

Pastor - Michael Mudlaff
Assistant Pastor - Steven Randall
Administrative Assistant - Elaine Hurst
Director of Children's Ministry - Karen Admussen
Director of Music - Larry Kussatz
Youth Coordinator - Hugh Sheppard
Stephen Leaders
Karen Breeding, Carolyn Eyerly, Rick Eyerly,
Pastor Michael Mudlaff, Eleanor Smith
Custodian - Barbara McCargar
Head Usher - Fergus Taylor
Communion Stewards
Kay Cunitz & Cynthia Fisher
Paul & Jeannie Havnen
Ron & Marilyn Long
Wedding Coordinators
Carolyn Eyerly, Marilyn Long, Irene Reed
Flower Chairperson - Audrene Hansen
First Ladies
Jan Geisler, Lou Heitbrink, Fran Nugteren
Darlene Reighard, Myra Verros, Mary Lu Younkin



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