

The Westkirk Presbyterian Church

Shepherd

Volume 24 No. 2 February 2009

Love Is in the Air

Love is in the air, but not for the reasons you may think. Oh yea, it's February all right. Valentine's Day, the youth-sponsored Sweetheart Dinner, my son Nathanael turns 5, Washington, Lincoln, and men everywhere are planning ahead for the perfect night of expensive romance. Well, the first 5 anyway. That's a lot of love.

But as we make our way through First John, we are reminded of God's love for us. And that love includes the reminder that as Christians, we must love one another. John says in his Gospel, ^{ESV} **John 13:34** *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.* ³⁵ *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.* Francis Schaeffer, the great practical theologian of the 20th century, wrote of love as, "the mark of the Christian," and it was to this passage that he was referring. How else will the world know that we are Christians, or that Jesus is who we claim he is, if we do not demonstrate love one to another? At Westkirk it looks like this. We make our participation in the life of the church a top priority. In doing so, we gather together for learning and fellowship and caring for one another. When one of us is hurting, we all hurt. When one of us experiences joy, we all rejoice together! As the church family lives life together, others notice. Our extended family notices. Our neighbors notice. Our co-workers hear about it and through it all, the Holy Spirit softens hearts and gives people the desire to find out more. They may think it's all about Westkirk, and what a wonderful church family we share, but it's really about Jesus and what he has done for us and to us. It shows. We are different.

In John's first epistle, he reminds us of this new commandment. But as we have discovered, the love we have for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, does not only show others that we are followers of Jesus, it also shows us that we are followers of Jesus. In other words, by the change in our lives, brought about by the Holy Spirit, and the resulting way we now live our lives, we can look back and see how we, ourselves have changed. When we see it, and others see it in us, that is good evidence that we truly are saved, born again, among the elect, and have an eternity to look forward to in God's presence.

Love. It's more than the gooey feeling we get when we are with the one we love. As we determine to demonstrate love in our care for one another, as well as those outside our fellowship, that is one way we are assured that our salvation is real. How are you showing that kind of love? Are you serving in ministry? Are you caring for others in the context of a Housekirk? Are you coming alongside someone in need? If not, ask God to affirm his grace in your life and show you where he has called you to love.

Pastor Michael



^{ESV} **1 John 2:9** *Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.* ¹⁰ *Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.*



The Session

Moderator - Michael Mudlaff

Class of 2008

George De Graaf
 Chuck Heitbrink
 Ron Long
 Kevin Riggins

Class of 2009

Kevin Heer
 Kirk Yentes

Class of 2010

Rick Eyerly
 Jerry Tuinstra
 Melinda Turnbull

Clerk of Session - Robin Riggins

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Assistant Treasurer - Aaron Pieper

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

Board of Deacons

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Barb Asman
 Dianne Glanzer
 Bette Jones
 Fran Nugteren
 Kris Thompson

Class of 2009

Marilyn Long
 Marillyn McCulloch
 John Schwien
 Sandy Tuinstra
 Sherie Whitehead

Class of 2010

Linda Aldrich
 Jeff Brady
 Kay Cunitz
 Cynthia Fisher
 Eric Wickemeyer



- 1 *Nathan Hoepker
- 3 *Alec Sheppard
- 3 *Jeanelle Welscher
- 5 Pat Gorman
- 5 Samona Yentes
- 6 *Anastasia Admussen
- 6 Dottie Phillips
- 7 Donald Dory
- 11 Lou Heitbrink
- 12 *Nathanael Mudlaff
- 13 Vicki Bone
- 13 Alice Romans
- 14 Wally Romans
- 16 Audrene Hansen
- 22 Mike Dake
- 22 *Bryce Sonnichsen
- 25 David Liljedahl
- 28 Gary Robinson
- *Youth member



- 4 Le & Helen Main
- 19 Kurt & Gloria Huyser
- 22 Ron & Darlene Reighard
- 26 Hap & Juanita Finestead

Happy Birth Day!

Congratulations to Brian and Amy Soper on the birth of their daughter, **Kallie Rae Soper**. Kallie was born December 16. She joins her siblings Shyanne, Shelby, Dylan and Layla.

And best wishes to Bryan and Sarah Sharp. A new daughter, **Josie Brielle Sharp**, was born January 9 in Des Moines. Boman and Emeth welcomed home their new sister.

Baptism Services

On December 28, 2008 we celebrated the baptism of **Paige Havnen Cox**, daughter of Todd and Molly Havnen Cox. Paige was born September 6, 2008. Maternal grandparents are Paul and Jeannie Havnen (Westkirk members). Paternal grandparents are Deborah Ruscillo of Satellite Beach, FL and Charles Cox of Melbourne, FL.

A group of Westkirk members gathered at Olivet Baptist Church on January 11, 2009 to celebrate the baptism by profession of faith of

Danika Stadlander, Karissa Stadlander, Kyra Stadlander and Ross Wickemeyer. Because the weather prohibited baptism by immersion at Gray's Lake, Olivet graciously allowed use of their facility for the service.





The Bulletin Board

February Activities – See related articles in this issue.

Sunday	2/1	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m.; Installation of Officers <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	2/2	Commissions meeting , 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	2/3	Stephen Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2/4	WOW , supper 5:45 p.m.; Choir , 7:30 p.m.
Thursday	2/5	Prayer Shawl Ministry (Johnson), 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	2/7	House & Grounds Work Day , 8:00 a.m. * * * * *
Sunday	2/8	Sunday School , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion , 10:30 a.m. <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m. Sunday Night at the Kirk , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	2/9	Omega Housekirk , 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	2/10	New Light meeting , 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2/11	WOW , supper 5:45 p.m.; Choir , 7:30 p.m.
Thursday	2/12	Dorcas Circle , 1:00 p.m.
Friday	2/13	Women's Bible Study , 9:00 a.m. Sweetheart Dinner , 6:00 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	2/15	Sunday School; Explorers Class , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. Food Pantry Collection March Shepherd articles due <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	2/16	Session/Deacons Meeting , 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	2/17	The Clan Housekirk , 1:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2/18	WOW , supper 5:45 p.m.; Choir , 7:30 p.m.
Thursday	2/19	Prayer Shawl Ministry (Wilson), 1:00 p.m.
Friday	2/20	Women's Bible Study , 9:00 a.m. * * * * *
Sunday	2/22	Sunday School; Explorers Class , 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. <i>New Life</i> , 6:30 p.m.
Monday	2/23	Omega Housekirk , 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	2/24	Bagpipers Luncheon , 1:00 p.m., Biaggi's, West Des Moines New Light meeting , 6:30 p.m. Stephen's Ministry , 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2/25	Ash Wednesday Service , 7:00 p.m. Choir immediately following service. No WOW activities
Friday	2/27	Women's Bible Study , 9:00 a.m.
Saturday	2/28	SOS Parenting Meeting , 10:00 a.m.



Dorcas Circle

All ladies of the church and their guests are invited to this month's special presentation. Gail DeGraaf will be giving a lesson on "*Becoming a Woman after God's Own Heart*" on **February 12 at 1:00 p.m. in the Hospitality Room**. Please join us as we learn more about God, enjoy dessert together and get to know each other better. Refreshments will be provided by Carolyn Chenoweth and Mary Lu Younkin.

Marriage Class

Gail and I will be leading another class in the near future. We will be using the same book as last year, **Six Secrets to a Lasting Love** by Dr. Gary and Barb Rosberg. The workbook is "Discover the Love of Your Life All Over Again." Some of you who wanted to be a part of the class last year but were unable to join us, see George or Gail De Graaf if you are interested.. The class will be for eight weeks. More information to come. . . . *George De Graaf*

Annual Meeting Report

The annual meeting of the Congregation of Westkirk Presbyterian Church held January 25, fell after the deadline for this issue, so it will be reviewed in the next *Shepherd*. Please watch for a complete report in March.

Women' Bible Study

Starting the second week in February, Sasha Mudlaff will be leading a Beth Moore Bible study titled "Jesus the One and Only." This is an 11-week Bible study based on the book of Luke. The class will meet on Friday mornings from 9:00-11:00 a.m. in the Hospitality Room. Each week there will be a DVD presentation of Beth Moore speaking from the Holy Land, as well as prayer and discussion time. Childcare will be provided.

If you would like to be a part of this group, please contact Sasha so she can order enough workbooks for everyone.

Ash Wednesday Service Planned

Westkirk will have an Ash Wednesday worship service at **7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25**. The service will include Holy Communion.

There will be no supper or Bible classes that night. However, choir rehearsal will be held immediately following the service.

Choir Notes

Now that the choir is back to their regular Sunday Worship Service schedule, we can look forward to hearing them most weeks. Much beautiful music is planned for the Lenten season. The group is already working on the music for Holy Week. (Easter is April 12.)

2009 Pledge Envelopes

Have you picked up your new pledge envelopes for 2009? If not, they are still available in the Hospitality Room. Just be sure to register your name and box number on the signup sheet. The envelopes are for your regular giving during the year.

Condolences

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of **Marvin Nugteren** who died January 21 at his home in Clive. Marv was the husband of Fran Nugteren and father of Jerry Tuinstra, Westkirk Presbyterian Church members. His funeral service was held at Westkirk on January 24.

Stephen Ministry Training Class In Home Stretch

Despite the weather challenges in December and January, the class of six Stephen Ministers at Westkirk is nearing completion, with five classes left before the class is commissioned. “Our trainees have worked extremely hard and their dedication is paying off,” says Carolyn Eyerly. “The course has involved pre-class reading assignments and in-class lectures, discussion, and role playing. Our trainees are showing some real growth in knowledge and skills.”

Even though it can be uncomfortable at times, skill practicing is the most valuable component of the training. It takes what you are learning out of the realm of theory and turns it into something you have to apply. It can be very challenging to role play, for instance, that you’re ministering to a young mother whose husband has just died. It brings out real emotions and tears. But it is extremely helpful because it prepares you for actual caregiving situations.

During the skill practicing there is real ministry going on too. When you learn and discuss grief, you can’t help but surface genuine issues from your own life. When this happens, we find ourselves ministering to each other. All of that will help the trainees become better caregivers later on.

A recurring emphasis of Stephen Ministry training has been confidentiality. What a care receiver says to his or her Stephen Minister is held strictly confidential. Even the identity of the care receiver is kept confidential from the Stephen Ministers. This is important for potential care receivers in the future. Most people are reluctant to share their problems and situations because they are afraid of others finding out. The confidentiality of Stephen Ministry lets people know that they can discuss difficult concerns with their Stephen Minister, while also getting the help they need, and not be afraid of others finding out.

Remaining topics for our trainees include: Dealing with Depression, How to Make a First Caring Visit, and Supervision, a key to quality Christian care. When those topics are done, the trainees will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers and receive their first care giving assignments. But even then, their training is far from over. “Continuing education is an important component of Stephen Ministry training,” says, Eyerly. “Stephen Ministers will meet for continuing education twice a month, even after they begin meeting with their care receivers. The goal is for Stephen Ministers to continually enhance their skills and learn new ways to care. We want them to provide the best care possible for their care receivers.”

Membership Class Offered

You are invited to become a member of the fellowship of Westkirk Presbyterian Church. Orientation to prepare for church membership will be led by Pastor Michael. You need not have already made a decision to join Westkirk in order to attend. This is an informational class; however, it is a prerequisite for membership.

“Explorers” class will begin **February 15 at 9:00 a.m.** Please register at the Welcome Center to reserve a place in this class.

DMARC Food Pantry Collection February 15

The Food Pantry prefers to receive monetary donations so that they can purchase larger quantities of the food items most needed. Please make your check payable to **Westkirk** and indicate it is for **Food Pantry**. (You can simply put your check in the collection plate along with your normal offering.)

If you would rather donate food items, the deacons will be distributing grocery sacks on February 1 and February 8 after the worship service. Please refer to the list of items that is attached to the sack when making your donation.

Your donations (monetary or food items) will be collected on **February 18**. Thank you for continuing to help feed the hungry by supporting this ministry.

. . . *Dianne Glanzer, Deacon*

MISSION COMMISSION February 2009



Back2Back Ministries Mission Team Presentation

It was indeed a blessing to hear the thoughts, emotions, concerns, and praises that the team presented on Sunday the 11th. From “Bob” the walking stick to Steve sharing his response in wanting to pursue a ministerial “Spirit motivated desire.” . It was great to see the various people involved in the ministry as well as those who were being cared for in the “children homes.” We praise God for this ministry and pray

for the continued work reaching out to the homeless there as well as in other parts of the world. It was neat to hear Monica’s comment about the advantage of having children go along as they don’t sit and try to figure out how a person is going to communicate with the people there. They just “grab a basketball or soccer ball” and play. Each one had their own perspective on what they saw or heard and what made an impact on them. Thanks for sharing.

International Messengers

Dan will try again to present the ministry in Hungary. The weather got very cold and W.O.W. was cancelled that evening. Hopefully by the time you are reading this we will have heard his presentation and tasted the “Cold Fruit Soup.” We praise God for allowing us to support International Messengers and for Dan to participate in this ministry. Pray for Eastern Bloc Countries like Hungary, Poland, Romania, and others. Thank God for those ministering in these areas.

Hope Ministries

If you were watching TV when it was very cold, the Des Moines City Council decided to tear down the temporary housing on the near north side of downtown. There was quite a bit of controversy as to whether they should have done this or not. Hopefully you noticed that Hope Ministries, and specifically Dave Burrier of Hope, was there on TV, reaching out to the homeless at that time when it was needed most. We praise God for dedicated people like Dave and others at Hope. We are also thankful that Westkirk has decided to support Hope in its various ministries. In January, you had an opportunity to participate in the “Scan a Meal” program where you could buy a meal for \$2.05. Thank You.

Freedom for Youth

The Mission Commission will be serving a meal to the youth at FFY in February. If any Housekirk or other group would be interested in doing this, check with Sherie Whitehead to find out more information regarding a date and time.

Mission Commission

If you are interested in missions and would want to be a part of this commission, please contact any one of the members and find out more about it and how you can be a part. We need a representative for Ruth Harbor. If you have a passion for this ministry which helps young women deal with an unplanned pregnancy, pray about joining us. Thank You for your part in supporting all of these ministries. Should you have questions regarding the Missions that we support, please see any one of the Mission Commission members. They are, Gail De Graaf, Cynthia Fisher, Somer Gillett, Dan Marvin, Julie Norem, Rus Norem, Wendy Reed, Bryan Sharp, Alvin & Lois Lundgren Stecker, Sherie Whitehead.

... *George DeGraaf, Mission Chair*

Presenting ...

Jack and Barb Wilson

On a night when Des Moines was experiencing record frigid temperatures, Jack and Barb, John and I found a warm, quiet corner at Bennigan's restaurant where we could talk. Jack offered a prayer, and as we indulged in our menu selections amid our own gentle chatter, the story of two people unfolded as neatly as the napkins in our lap.



Jack grew up in Detroit, Michigan, attended the University of Michigan and graduated from Parsons College in Fairfield, Iowa, with a degree in Romance Languages. He was president of Sigma Phi Epsilon. Barb, a Des Moines native is the daughter of Clarence and the late Hazel Duke, charter members of Westkirk, graduated from Roosevelt High School and went on to Parsons College where she was a charter member of the Parsons chapter of Alpha Xi Delta sorority.

She was a new co-ed, and Jack was a junior when a friend introduced them at the Student Union. Life came at them fast. They were married June 4, 1960 at Westminster in Des Moines, attended Jack's graduation at Parsons June 5; and were on their way to New Jersey two months later when Jack was drafted into the army. His military duty and civilian work opportunities sent this new couple on an eleven-year nomadic trek. From New Jersey they moved to Huntsville, Alabama where Jack worked in the Ordnance Guided Missile School, pursued additional language courses, adding Russian and German, and taught English to NATO troops. Later, work-related moves took them to Michigan, New York, Michigan a second time, and then home to Iowa where Jack worked for Barb's dad at Duke Ready Mix, real estate and later for Seneca Tank, a fuel delivery equipment business from which he retired in 2006.

While Jack served in the army, Barb attended business college, worked as a secretary, security clearance officer and later took care of their baby daughter, Laurie. In Des Moines, she was an interior designer in the custom decorating departments of J.C. Penney's and Younkers. Her love for knitting led her to a local yarn shop where she taught knitting. She still enjoys knitting, reading, gardening and walking. Jack enjoys golf, gardening, crossword puzzles, and reading, but most of all, Barb and Jack enjoy visits with their grandson, Maddox (6), and their daughter and her husband Mike who live in Prairie Village, Kansas.

Barb and Jack have always been involved in church activities and especially the youth program at Westminster during Laurie's school years. They are charter members of Westkirk. Jack has served as Worship Leader, Elder and teacher, is enjoying the "Fighter Verses" program, serves on the Prayer Commission, and sings in the choir.

Last year, Barb had a lung cancer scare which renewed their faith in the power of prayer through which family, friends and the Westkirk Church family can work miracles. The "benign" diagnosis following a difficult surgery was relief beyond measure even as the pain lingers. We continue to pray for her full recovery.

Reading about our church members can be a "novel" adventure that you can enjoy in a quiet, warm corner of your own home, or you can converse in person over coffee in the hospitality lounge where you will find Clarence, Barb and Jack on most Sundays.

... by Regi Donaldson



Acquire the Fire

Join us for Acquire the Fire 2009 - Here Comes Trouble Conference, February 20-21, 2009, at First Federated Church in Des Moines. This conference is going to be a fun weekend of great music and terrific teaching to help all of us grow in our faith. The cost of tickets is \$63 per student and registration information will be e-mailed to parents and sent home with students very soon!! For more information, contact Pastor Steve and/ or visit: <http://desmoines.acquirethefire.com/>

Second Annual Sweetheart Banquet

I'd like to invite you to join us on **Friday February 13 for the Second Annual Sweetheart Banquet** (fellowship and hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m.). The *New Life* (senior high) and BLAST (middle school) groups, at Westkirk and Urban Heights, will be working together to make sure that everyone who attends has a memorable night. The youth will be serving dinner, providing child care, and a few of them will even be sharing their musical and artistic talents. Tickets are \$15 per person (coming soon to a Hospitality Room near you) and all money raised will go to help pay for our youth to attend mission trips and camp this summer. Menu details to come soon!! We hope to see you there.

Sweetheart Banquet Set-Up

Calling all middle school and high school students! It's that time of year again and we have another opportunity to show those who support and pray for us (that would be your parents and the members of our church family) that we appreciate and love them. Our Second Annual Sweetheart Banquet is scheduled for February 13 from 6 to 8 p.m. All students are asked to show up at the following times to help make this a memorable night for all who attend:

Thursday, February 12, 7 to 8 p.m. to help decorate.

Friday, February 13, 5 to 9 p.m. for the banquet and to help clean up afterwards.

Everyone did a terrific job last year and had a bunch of fun serving parents and our church families. **Please mark your calendars** and request time off from work so you can help make sure that this year is even better!

Bagpipers? . . . Just Who Are They?!

You are not familiar with these folks? Well, they are a group of singles 55+ years of age who enjoy Christian fellowship and a chance to go out for a nice lunch at various restaurants. This is a social gathering of Westkirk members and friends.

All singles (men and women) who meet the age requirement (or almost!) are invited to the monthly outings which are scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of the month year around, except November and December when the lunch is on the third Tuesday. Just call **Sally Harrison (276-0775)** for reservations, no later than noon the Monday before. Please consider this your special invitation.

The next luncheon date is **Tuesday, February 24, 1:00 p.m. at Biaggi's in West Des Moines.** Let's see you there, Westkirk Singles!

New Prayer Shawl Ministry to Begin

On Thursday, February 19 at 1:00 p.m. a new Prayer Shawl group will be meeting in the Hospitality Room. This group will begin knitting and crocheting items to be given to Westkirk members and friends during Deacon visits .

If you have questions please contact the group leaders, **Barb Wilson (276-1113) or Regi Donaldson (267-6263).** Plan to attend the first meeting of this important ministry.

Children's Ministry

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Be joyful always; pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." My family can certainly testify that I am not always joyful, and I confess that I haven't yet mastered how to pray continually, but the good news is that God always lets us start over again, no matter how often we keep coming back to him. One prayer habit that I started a few months ago is to pray for your children on their birthdays. If you have any special prayer requests for your child or your family, I would love to include those in my prayers. I read in Pray magazine recently that each prayer we say is like laying a gold brick on the road to heaven. If that's so, then let's keep laying those bricks! Following is a list of this month's highlights. Please join us.

Sweetheart Banquet: Friday, February 13 in the Great Hall. Fellowship and hors d'oeuvres begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m.. The *New Life* (senior high) and BLAST (middle school) groups, at Westkirk and Urban Heights, will be working together to make sure that everyone who attends has a memorable night. The youth will be serving dinner, providing child care, and a few of them will even be sharing their musical and artistic talents. The youth will soon be selling tickets for this event, so if you're interested in joining us, please ask one of them. Tickets are \$15 per person and all money raised will go to help pay for our youth to attend mission trips and camp this summer.

Parent Meeting: Saturday, February 28 in the Hospitality Room from 10:00-11:30 a.m. This will be an opportunity for parents with children of all ages to gather together, discuss our ministry, share parenting triumphs and struggles and to sign up for a parenting small group designed to link parents of children of similar ages together for support and fellowship. Childcare will be available.

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

Parenting Tip:

Everyone Is Doing It. You may think you are the only one experiencing the problem, but you can be sure the old adage "Everyone is doing it" not only applies to what your child wants to do, but to what you are facing, too. You are not alone. Do not be afraid to talk to others about the challenges you are facing!

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

... Jerry and Sandy Tuinstra

Thank You Notes . . .

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for my pretty poinsettia, it is still blooming.

Thank you also for the many ladies in Dorcas Circle that have sent me cards and notes.

The church looked so pretty at the candlelight service.

Thank you again for your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,
Wiggs Lyman

Westkirk Presbyterian Church,

Just to know that in countless ways our family and friends are with us, make the way easier.

Thank you for the beautiful plant that was sent for my Dad and the Kid's Grandpa. Your thoughtfulness was appreciated.

Lynn, Samantha & Ben Dixon

Westkirk Friends,

My sincere thanks for your many cards, letters, phone calls, visits and prayers during my recent illness. All your encouragement was appreciated. It was comforting to know my church friends were concerned.

Sincerely,
Larry Kussatz

Dear Westkirk friends,

I want to thank all of my friends at Westkirk for remembering me after my fall on December 11. A broken hip is no fun to recover from, but hearing from so many of you certainly did help. I realized when something happens, our church friends showed they really cared, and came with food, sent many cards and called to check on me.

I thank you all and will be glad when I can come back to church again.

In Christian love,
Marilyn Lanham

The Shepherd

Communication Organ of
Westkirk Presbyterian Church
2700 Colby Woods Drive, Urbandale, Iowa 50322
Phone: 515/253-0330
e-mail: westkirk@westkirk.org

Managing Editor - Lou Heitbrink

Proof Reader - Kelli Miller

Contributing Editors

Karen Admussen

Carolyn Chenoweth

Regi Donaldson

George and Gail De Graaf

Dianne Glanzer

Audrene Hansen

Sally Harrison

Helen Main

Michael Mudlaff, Steve Randall

Production Staff

Dan & Jan Geisler

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2700 Colby Woods Drive
Urbandale, Iowa 50322
Phone: 515-253-0330
Fax: 515-253-0596

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