

The Westkirk Presbyterian Church

Shepherd

Volume 24 No. 6 June 2009

The Great Marriage Experience

Many of you are aware that George and Gail De Graaf are leading a marriage study in the multi-purpose room on Sunday mornings during the 9 o'clock hour. And those of you who have benefited from one of their classes in the past know that the couples participating are in for a great ride. Right around the corner will be a Sunday morning in which most, if not all, of these couples will have an opportunity to renew their marriage vows before God and the entire congregation. I love those Sundays because there is wedding cake in the Hospitality Room after church!

But soon you will begin to hear and see the evidence of a great marriage experience here at Westkirk Presbyterian Church. With the help of Dr. Gary and Barb Rosberg and their team, Westkirk (now and in the years to come), will benefit from families whose marriages are not only strengthened, but in some cases, saved by the grace of God, because our church is becoming more intentional in its care for our families. In fact, the goal of The Great Marriage Experience is to aid churches like ours in developing, reinforcing, and replicating a culture of great Godly marriages. The process will be ongoing and one of the things that will happen here at Westkirk in the next year is that we will be able to take a comprehensive look at the strengths and weaknesses of the marriages in our church. Since Westkirk is a member of The Great Marriage Experience, we will be given tools to encourage and support our married and soon-to-be married couples.

Some of those tools include: monthly Date With a Purpose subscriptions for all of us, including audio coaching from the Rosbergs as well as other discipleship tools; and access to Housekirk (small group) studies as well as the Rosberg Marital Assessment for all our couples. What will it mean for us as a church? Well, together, we will be able to assess the marriages in our church and choose appropriate studies and resources to help our families and our entire congregation grow in our personal relationships. As I have on a couple occasions in the past, we will hear what God has to say about relationships in his Word, right from the pulpit. In these ways, we will be able to continue to reinforce a culture of great marriages in our church, and hopefully, help all of us strengthen our marriages and proactively address problems in our relationships before they turn into a family crisis!

Marriage, the first institution established in Scripture by God, is under attack in our culture. While over 90% of all Americans will marry at some point in their lives, almost 50% of these marriages end in divorce. And I can tell you that cohabitation has quickly become the norm for couples of all ages. As much as we would like to believe otherwise, these statistics are about the same among professing Christians. So, for the sake of the next generation, let's champion Godly, biblical marriage between one man and one woman for the cause of Christ – together!

Pastor Michael



^{ESV} **Genesis 2:23** *Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*



Westkirk
Presbyterian
Church

The Session

Moderator - Michael Mudlaff

Class of 2009

David Arnold
Van Harden
Kevin Heer
Kirk Yentes

Class of 2010

Rick Eyerly
Gary Robinson
Jerry Tuinstra
Melinda Turnbull

Class of 2011

Chad Carlson
John Donaldson
Mark Scheve
Trent Vis

Clerk of Session - Robin Riggins

Treasurer - Chris Brown

Assistant Treasurer - Aaron Pieper

Commission Deacons

Christian Education - Sandy Tuinstra, 2010
Evangelism/Fellowship - Regi Donaldson, 2009
House and Grounds - Hugh Sheppard, 2009
Missions - Gail De Graaf, 2010
Prayer - Paul Nelson, 2010
Stewardship - Chuck Heitbrink, 2009
Worship - Kevin Riggins, 2009

Parish Deacons

Class of 2009
Barb Asman
Benae Duff
Marilyn Long
Marilyn McCulloch
Fran Nugteren
John Schwien
Kris Thompson
Sandy Tuinstra
Sherie Whitehead
Class of 2010
Linda Aldrich
Jeff Brady
Kay Cunitz
Cynthia Fisher
Nancy Schmidt
Diane Skinner
Myra Verros
Eric Wickemeyer



- 1 Brian Sharp
- 2 *Ryan Hansen
- 3 Nancy Boyd
- 3 *Ava Carlson
- 3 *Ian Carlson
- 3 Bill F. Raisch
- 4 George De Graaf
- 4 Shirley MacLafferty
- 4 Genevieve Stogdill
- 5 *Ben Moss
- 5 Sarah Moss
- 6 Joy Dauterive
- 6 Linda McMullen
- 6 Susan Smith
- 7 *Luke Kinney
- 7 Karissa Stadlander
- 7 Lindsey Vis
- 10 *Bradley Sonnichsen
- 11 Stephen Boyd
- 11 Don Lanham
- 11 Jerry Skinner
- 12 Melissa Wickemeyer
- 14 Karen Grimmus
- 14 Amy Withers
- 15 Mary Jean Petty
- 16 Martha Jane Petty
- 16 Heather Schultz
- 18 *Ben Huyser
- 18 Katie Ohlsen Avise
- 18 Rod Welsher
- 19 Brad Miller
- 20 *Boman Sharp
- 21 Nancy Thompson
- 22 Donna Willcox
- 24 Nyleve Taylor
- 25 *Ben Moss
- 28 Bob Schmadke
- 30 Barb Springer
- 30 Brian Dixon

*Youth Member

Congratulations

Best wishes to **Sonja Hansen and Derek Smith** who were united in marriage at Westkirk on May 23. Sonja is the daughter of Audrene Hansen (both are Westkirk members).



- 1 Dan & Jan Geisler
- 1 Bernie & Becky Kobernick
- 1 Bill & Wanita Oswalt
- 4 Jack & Barb Wilson
- 7 Ron & Marilyn Long
- 8 Jeff & Peggy Brady
- 9 Pat & Mirium Alshouse
- 10 Michael & Sasha Mudlaff
- 16 Wally & Alice Romans
- 16 Doug & Jess Kanis
- 16 Aaron & Jodi Pieper
- 16 Frank & Lois Swartz
- 16 Ashlee & Adam Wilson
- 17 Bill & Evva Dawdy
- 22 David & Debra Liljedahl
- 24 Mark & Erica Scheve
- 26 Mark & Hanna DeGroot
- 26 Tom & Benae Duff
- 27 Tom & Janelle Leahy
- 27 Kirk & Heather Sonnichsen
- 28 Rowdy & Rebecca Smith
- 30 Ann & Chris Hilton

Happy Birth Day!

Aaron and Jodi Pieper have a new son, **Isaac Nicholas Pieper**, born April 22, 2009. Sisters Ali and Maya welcomed their baby brother home.

Condolences

Our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of **Arlene Houghton Hubbell**, who died April 25 in Des Moines. Funeral service was held at Westkirk on April 28.



The Bulletin Board

June Activities – See related articles in this issue.

Monday	6/1	Commissions meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	6/2	Stephen Ministry, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	6/3	No WOW Activities
Thursday	6/4	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 7:00 p.m.
Friday	6/5	BLAST Lock-In * * * * *
Sunday	6/7	Teacher Appreciation Breakfast, 8:15 a.m. Sunday School, 9:00 a.m. Worship Service , 10:30 a.m. Sunday Night at the Kirk, 6:30 p.m.
Monday	6/8	Omega Housekirk, 6:30 p.m. Commission Deacons Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	6/9	New Light meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Friday	6/12	“Meet the President of GEM” (Missions), 7-8:30 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	6/14	Sunday School, 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion, 10:30 a.m. VBS Meeting, after worship Emeritus of Urbandale Worship, 2:00 p.m.
Monday	6/15	Session Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Parish Deacons Meeting, 7:00 p.m. <i>Shepherd July articles due</i>
Tuesday	6/16	No Clan Housekirk until September Stephen Ministry, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday	6/18	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 1:00 p.m.
Saturday	6/20	Arneson Wedding, 4:00 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	6/21	Sunday School; Explorers Class begins, 9:00 a.m.; Worship Service, 10:30 a.m. Father’s Day Baby Bottles Collection Day Summer Choir Rehearsal after Worship
Monday	6/22	Omega Housekirk, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	6/23	Bagpipers Luncheon, 1:00 p.m., Jimmy’s American New Light meeting, 6:30 p.m. * * * * *
Sunday	6/28	Sunday School; Explorers 9:00 a.m. Worship Service, 10:30 a.m. with Summer Choir



Thinking of Joining Westkirk? Or Maybe Just Want to Learn More?

An **Explorers** class will be offered beginning June 21 at 9:00 a.m. If you are not yet a member of our church family and would like to consider membership or would just like to know more about Westkirk, come join this 4-session class. The Explorers class is a prerequisite for church membership. You may register for this session in the Hospitality Room. Applicants will be received into membership on August 16.

Marriage Covenant Sunday Coming

George and Gail De Graaf have been leading a class of couples exploring ways to make their marriage commitment as strong as possible. Watch your Sunday bulletin for an announcement of Marriage Covenant Sunday which will mark the end of this session.

Be a Summer Singer

While our Chancel Choir has a well-deserved vacation, we will hear from the “summer choir” once a month. This will be a time for anyone (members and friends) who wishes to sing along to join the group. Rehearsals will be after worship on the third Sunday of the month, then the group sings for the service on the fourth Sunday. It will be fun! If you have questions, please ask a choir member or **Director of Music Larry Kussatz**.

Stewardship Report

The financial results for the first four months are as follows:

	Current Year	Last Year
Ingathering	\$146,939.78	\$121,907.11
Expenses	143,082.54	120,226.28
Difference	3,857.24	1,680.83

In April an additional \$4,000 was paid on the pledge loan. These payments were over and above the general ingathering. This leaves a balance of approximately \$109,000 on the note which is due December 31, 2009.

We are grateful for your continued faithfulness to the ministry at Westkirk as we proceed to “Know Christ and Make Him Known.”

*. . . Chuck Heitbrink,
Stewardship Commission Deacon*

Help in Crisis

Are you or someone you know going through a crisis in life? These crises happen in all of our lives at one time or another. They include such things as depression over the loss of a job, grief at the death of a loved one, the necessity of hospitalization, the birth of a child. When crises come, it is helpful to have someone who cares for you. Our congregation has trained lay people who offer a ministry of Christian caring for those in need. When a crisis happens make use of their ministry.

To find out more about **Stephen Ministry** or to receive a Stephen Minister’s care, call Pastor Michael at the church office or Karen Breeding at 963-3954 and tell them about your situation. They will help you decide whether or not Stephen Ministry would be a good fit for you.

Food Pantry Sunday

The Deacons appreciate your donations to the Food Pantry. You gave 93 grocery items and \$225.00.



Vacation Bible School

July 19 – 23

Westkirk Presbyterian Church

Urban Heights Evangelical Covenant Church

Get ready for a summer adventure where we go back in time to the early church in Rome! Led by Paul, being held in prison by his guard Brutus, and the Underground Church, we will be learning all about how:

- God's love is a gift. (Romans 6:23)
- God's love changes us. (Romans 12:2)
- God's love is always with us. (Romans 8:38)
- God's love saves us. (Romans 5:8)
- God's love is worth sharing. (Romans 1:16)

We will shop and make crafts in a Roman marketplace. We will play ancient Roman games like the shot put and chariot races. Each day will begin and end with worship to God and time to meet as a family of Christ, hearing God's word and seeing how it applies to our daily lives.

With such an undertaking, we will need lots of volunteers! Shopkeepers, games leaders and helpers, Family leaders and assistants, Actors and actresses. Prayerfully consider how God may be leading you to take on one of these critical roles. If you have ever wanted to act or teach and wanted a trial run – this week will be the perfect opportunity! Some roles will only be needed for a few nights, so if you cannot commit to the whole week, but would be available for part, let us know!

Lots of behind-the-scenes work will also be needed in the weeks ahead. First and foremost, we desire the prayers of the church for this week and all adults and children who are led to be there. We will need preparations for decorating (columns and caves), items to be donated (like baskets and beautiful rugs to sit on), and crafts to organize. If you are available to help out in any of these ways, please contact Gloria Huyser at 284-7443.

Check out the display in the narthex for additional information—and check out our website! www.groupvbs.com/webtoebox/myvbs/Westkirk is our web address. You may register yourself as a helper or your child as a participant! Also, check the bulletin for updates as we get closer to our VBS week.

Gloria Huyser, Director 284-7443

Karen Admussen, 253-0330

Barb West, 278-1371

Help Our New Missionary to Latvia

Soon **Isaac Hunsberger** (of the Teen Challenge Hunsbergers) and his family will be leaving for a two-year assignment in Latvia. He has raised funds for his transportation and now is working on gathering support for living expenses during his stay abroad. The Communion Sunday special gift on June 14 will be to help Isaac reach his goal. Please give generously to aid this eager new missionary.





MFTH: MEALS FROM THE HEARTLAND

Take 17

women, place them in a room set up for filling plastic bags with soy, vitamins, dry vegetables, and rice, weighing each bag, sealing and placing bags in boxes, 721 bags in about 1 and 1/2 hours—after serving them



brownies and lemonade—you have the Dorcas Circle ladies who showed up on Thursday afternoon, May 14 at Meredith Drive Reformed Church!!! And they paid for the privilege to do this activity!!! The food will probably be sent to Haiti, or possibly Tanzania, each bag is for 6 servings at a cost of 25 cents a serving. For the recipient family, it means not starving.

If you think this might be something you could do, you might want to think about joining greater Des Moines area people who are getting involved in this same activity at HyVee Hall September 3-7. If we can get a group of ten signed up at an appointed time to do this, please let me know. They are beginning to pre-register already.

GREATER EUROPE MISSION - Westkirk will be hosting the President, Henry Deneen, and the U.S. Director, Jay Butler, on Friday, June 12, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Hospitality Room. The purpose of this **Vision Briefing** is to introduce us to the new president and have him share about the new mission vision and strategic initiatives in certain European cities. Our missionary, Gary De Graaf, will be living with his new wife, Kate, in one of these cities: Lille, France. So we are inviting any of our congregation who has a heart for missions in Europe and would be interested in knowing more about GEM to attend. If you are interested, please let Gail De Graaf know, so we have an idea of how many might attend.

FREEDOM FOR YOUTH - FARMER'S MARKET Beginning in May, each Saturday morning at their campus at 2301 Hickman Road, the teenage youth will be displaying and selling items they have crafted: woodworking and metal projects, pottery and jewelry, plus their garden produce. Come, listen to Christian bands, enjoy a morning latte or burger at lunch while strolling through their outdoor gardens. Profits from the market will be placed in a scholarship fund to help their students in post-secondary education. So, if you would normally head downtown for a farmer's market, or out west, please consider going to this one first, and help them with your interest and your purchases. Thanks!!!

RUTH HARBOR - Please continue to fill your baby bottle with coins and dollars or even checks. These are to be returned to the church on Father's Day, June 21. Please remember to bring them back.

THE GIDEONS ARE COMING!!! On July 5 during Sunday School, two representatives from the Gideons will be sharing their ministry with us, then staying around during the worship service and coffee time to talk with our congregation. Hope you will take that opportunity to get to know them and hear more about this great ministry.

HOPE MINISTRIES- Watch the bulletin for more information about **Undies Sunday** when we will begin another collection. This time it will be for underwear, which is a necessity for each person who comes to a HOPE Facility for help. You may begin to collect NEW underwear for men (Med-XXL), women (Hi-cut bikini style 12-XXL), children(6-8,10-12), and toddlers (2T-5T boys and girls).

(Mission Report continued)

We hear from **Jonathan and Becky Schuster** that it is hard for them to be separated during this time. Becky and children will be coming to the U.S. to be with Jonathan in July. They will be here at Westkirk July 24-26. Hope you can enjoy talking with them and hearing about God's work in Ireland. Becky will tell us about the American who has been leading the youth to know Christ in Skerries this month. Praise God!!

Ward and Gwen Schmeidel, Campus Crusade for Christ, write that there will be over 72 upper Midwest graduates who will invest next year as full-time campus ministers with Campus Crusade. God has prepared them to be the next generation of laborers in the harvest among college students. Pray for them in this new venture for the Lord.

Peter and Ana Lucaciu are getting ready to head back to Romania for **Romanian Evangelistic Medical Mission**. They will be receiving a number of teams from the U.S. to work short-term at the orphanages, doing VBS or medical work, helping needy families, and ministering among students. They already have a long list of projects for carpenters and other handypeople to complete around their various buildings. May God bless them.

Hope everyone enjoyed participating in **Mission Sunday**. If you missed David Burrier's talk in the Sanctuary after dinner, you missed the icing on the cake! He brought all the area missions together as they serve our Lord in ministry and in harmony with each other. The Des Moines area is greatly blessed with all of these ministries working together.

Thank you for your support of Missions at Westkirk - To God be the Glory! Mission Commission members: Gail De Graaf, Cynthia Fisher, Somer Gillett, Lois Lundgren-Stecker, Dan Marvin, Wendy Reed, Bryan Sharp, Sherie Whitehead. Ben and Terrie Bishop also attend.

... Gail De Graaf, Missions Commission Deacon

The World at Our Doorstep



Real Moms. Real Lives. Real Stories.

*Hearts at Home Presents the
2009 North Central Regional Conference*

Calling all Moms!!

Now is your chance to take advantage of all the abundant, valuable resources available in one place during an unforgettable weekend. Hearts at Home offers an amazing opportunity for moms of all ages and stages to step back, learn, and gain a new perspective on motherhood.

The 2009 Hearts at Home conference will take place November 6 and 7 in Rochester, Minnesota, at the Mayo Civic Center.

Learn from Dr. Kevin Leman, internationally known psychologist, media personality, and bestselling author of *The Birth Order Book*, along with twenty-five other books on marriage and family, as he uses his wit and common sense psychology to teach and entertain. **Gain knowledge** as **Jill Savage**, author, founder of Hearts at Home, and mother of five, shares her wisdom and insights on parenting and marriage. **Take a moment for yourself, sit back, and relax** while listening to **Sally Baucke**, professional comedian and speaker, and musical guests **Go Fish**. Address your own parenting concerns by choosing from more than 30 workshops that address the joys and challenges of parenting from infancy to adulthood.

Become encouraged, educated, and equipped to be the best mom you can be!

A complete registration brochure may be viewed at www.hearts-at-home.org or may be requested by calling the Hearts at Home office at (309) 828-MOMS. Receive a tote bag, lunch, and admission for \$80 when you register by mail, fax or online before October 14, 2009.

Hearts at Home is a Christ-centered organization that encourages, educates, and equips women in the profession of motherhood through various resources and events.

If you are interested in attending this awesome conference with some really fun moms from Westkirk, please contact Sasha Mudlaff (440-3025) or Karen Admussen (253-0330).

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House and Grounds Update

A sincere Thank You to all who participated in the Spring Clean-up/Project day! A good time was had by all and much progress was made. You'll notice new sod around the curbs, trees in the front yard are trimmed and shaped, as well as new mulch and plantings. Inside, the sanctuary woodwork was polished, choir music room cleaned out and re-configured, and basement organization were all accomplished. Additionally, hat's off to the "Spoon Platoon" for providing a delicious and hearty snack! Thank you again and we are looking forward to another work-day in the fall, concentrating on trees and shrubbery.

If you are interested in participating with the House & Grounds Commission, please contact one of the members or myself, as we're always looking for some good help!

Hugh Sheppard,

House & Grounds Commission Deacon



Jesus, Our Mediator Through Prayer

You have noticed that most prayers by Christians are prayed “in Jesus’ name.” We do that because He is our Mediator (He speaks on our behalf to God, the Father). We need this Mediator because we are sinful people and God is holy. “There is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5).

Jesus is also our Mediator because He is our High Priest. He is our “great high priest who has passed through the heavens,” one who “in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:14-16).

Having come to salvation in Christ alone by faith alone and being part of the New Covenant, we do not need to stay outside the temple, but are allowed into the “Holy of Holies” (Heb. 9:3). This was the special place in the old temple in Jerusalem where God resided with His Ark of the Covenant. Only the High Priest was allowed into that place on special occasions. Jesus died as our mediative High Priest and so we have confidence now to enter into that holy place through His blood. We have a “new and living way” (Heb. 10:20) into that special place where God resides today.

As new creatures in Christ, we too can come to God as priests. (We are no longer strangers and outsiders.) So we can draw near to God “with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22). The writer of Hebrews is talking about us being able as new creatures and “priests” to be able to enter that unseen spiritual realm where God resides. That is what we are doing in prayer. We are entering into heaven itself where Christ has gone “to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb. 9:24).

It is a special privilege to pray and know for sure that God hears us, that He has made sure through Christ that we can have an audience with Him. Make use of that privilege throughout every day. Bring to God your concerns about yourself, your family, your church, your nation.

May 31, the Prayer Commission will hold a Pentecost Sunday Prayer Service at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Pentecost was the day on which God poured out His Holy Spirit upon the church. Please join us for songs, scriptures and prayers focused on Pentecost and the Holy Spirit.

Remember to use the Prayer Room whenever the church is open. It is located behind the balcony seating.

Each Sunday after the morning service, Prayer Commission members will be at the front of the Sanctuary to pray with you.

. . . Paul Nelson, Prayer Commission Deacon

* * * * *



Thank You Note . . .

Dear Pastor Michael,

We would like to thank the congregation for the beautiful plant sent in memory of our mom. Another “Thank you” for allowing her services at the church and serving the luncheon. Westkirk was very important to our mom.

A huge “Thank you” to you for the beautiful service you gave honoring our mother. We had many people tell us it was a “fitting tribute” to a wonderful lady. All of your prayers and kind words were greatly appreciated.

Love,

Deb [Bentzinger]

[The Family of Arlene Hubbell]



Presenting . . .

David and Mary Arnold

The morning sun peeked in and out between heavy clouds, even as the western sky pulled a dark gray sheet slowly across the horizon. Heavy rain was forecast for this Sunday morning, and by the end of the service, the rain poured down. However, the weather outside did not dampen the spirit of the meeting inside with David and Mary Arnold. In a cozy corner of the Church Lounge, the conversation was as warm and pleasant as a cup of fragrant green tea.



David grew up in a Christian home on Des Moines' east side where church was a weekly activity that was stressed not only in the home, but throughout his extended family. While he came to faith in his junior years, a dedicated commitment would come later.

After graduating from East High School, David attended the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). Not sure what path he wanted to take, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. The two years of service during the Vietnam War helped his "focus on life," and at this time, he made a dedicated commitment to faith. He returned to UNI to complete his teaching degree, and taught elementary grades in Waterloo and in Ankeny. Later, David was employed with Northwestern Bell, where he used his Corps training to instruct employees in pole-climbing skills and safety. In time, David completed a Masters degree in Counseling while he developed and wrote various course curriculum materials for the company. With Northwestern Bell's Continuing Education policy, he was able to complete two degrees in School Administration from Drake University, including his Doctorate. Currently, he is Superintendent in the West Central Valley School District, and also serves as an elementary school principal.

Mary, too, grew up in a Christian home. Her mother attended Westminster and had her children attend during their elementary years. In her junior high years, Mary would accompany a friend to a local Methodist Church where she participated in Youth for Christ. In 1976 on Easter Sunday, Mary accepted Christ as her Savior while attending First Federated Church. She graduated from Roosevelt High School and DMACC in Ankeny. Mary is employed by Iowa Health Systems as a Certified Medical Assistant and Limited Radiographer.

The couple met when Mary worked at the Art Store in Merle Hay Mall. They married in 1977, and happily announced they will be celebrating their 32nd wedding anniversary this year. Life led them on an interesting journey from Iowa to Omaha, NE, Amana, IA, Kansas City, MO and the foothills of the Pocono Mountains in NE Pennsylvania, then back to Iowa. Their journey allowed them to remodel many homes, including a farmhouse built in 1827 in the "Endless Mountains."

God's grace has blessed them with three children: Nathan and his wife, Kate, who live in Minnesota; Sarah Sharp, her husband, Bryan, and their three children who live in Altoona; and the youngest, Andrew, following in his Grandfather's and Father's footsteps, who joined the Marines. He has recently deployed to Afghanistan. Let us pray for this family and especially young Andrew until he comes safely home.

When time permits in their busy lives, David enjoys deer hunting, gardening, and reading, especially books on Church history and theology, and Mary enjoys quilting, scrap-booking and spending time with their three grandchildren.

David and Mary visited Westkirk with their daughter and son-in-law, Sarah and Bryan Sharp (already members). After attending for about a year, they joined the church in February 2008. Today, David is a new Ruling Elder, and Mary is a Stephen's Minister. They love being "cookie people," and they serve often. So, after a Sunday Service, come to the Hospitality Room, have a cookie, and say, "Hello!" to two warm and friendly members, rain or shine.

. . . by Regi Donaldson

A Heart-Changing Conference

My name is **Linda Wilde**, and I have been a member at Westkirk for 18 months. From April 30 through May 2, I had the amazing honor of feeling completely exhilarated and completely beat up—because of the picture of God I had been shown at the Children Desiring God national conference. It’s been a few days now, but there are still some shafts of light shining brilliantly in my heart. I attended with Karen Admussen, but this is my own account, and you may certainly ask her about her experience.

Yes, it was a conference about children’s curricula and methods for children’s ministry, but it was so much more. There were plenary sessions, seminars, workshops, & bookstore browsing. And worship—thirst-quenching worship of our glorious God. The audio of all the plenary sessions is available free at ChildrenDesiringGod.org. I highly recommend that you listen for yourself, but I will mention a shaft of light from each address:

John Piper: we need to not only teach children true knowledge of God, but create mental categories for that truth so they know why they believe and can test all things, holding fast to what is true. Bruce Ware: the God revealed in all of Scripture is the God who is. Speaking on Isaiah 40-43, we were shown a vast, mind-blowing, humbling picture of the greatness of the Lord. Paul Tripp: we are like metal in its ore state. God will cure us of our “ore-ism” (He will refine us). He will make us like Christ. He will boil us in the fires of His grace and mercy. David Michael: having this (children’s) ministry from (this glorious) God, we do not lose heart. Why? It is God who makes us competent (to implement this thinking, these materials, this right vision of God into the hearts and minds of our children, so their faith will be strong because it will be in the true God revealed in all of Scripture).

The seminars I attended were very instructive. The opening seminar showed the difference between God-centered teaching, which makes God look mighty and loving, and sometimes subtly man-centered teaching, which belittles Him. Another seminar exposed the folly of our “self-esteem” culture, and put forward ways to teach children the esteem of God rather than the esteem of self. Another concentrated on different strategies for memorizing the Fighter Verses, and the great benefits those stored-up verses can have in daily life. A fourth stressed the necessity to teach big, even difficult, truths about God in age-appropriate ways—and a child’s capability to understand and love those big truths. Finally, a powerful workshop on being utterly dependent on the Spirit through prayer in the context of the classroom. I had examples from these seminars to share, but my allotted space is now used up. I close quickly with much gratitude to God for this conference, and all I was shown there.

Westkirk Student Ministry

When	What	Where
June 7/ 9 to 10 a.m..	Sunday School	Westkirk Youth Room
June 7/ 6:30 to 8 p.m.	Sunday Night at the Kirk	Westkirk Sanctuary
June 14/ 9 to 10 a.m.	Sunday School	Westkirk Youth Room
June 21/ 9 to 10 a.m.	Sunday School	Westkirk Youth Room
June 28/ 9 to 10 a.m.	Sunday School	Westkirk Youth Room
June 28/ TBD	New Life Sports Fest	Westkirk & Surrounding Areas



Christian Education Upcoming Events

Christian Education Appreciation Breakfast: On Sunday, June 7 at 8:15 a.m. there will be a breakfast for all Christian Education volunteers and their families in the Hospitality Room. We sincerely appreciate all the time and effort these people have put forth this past year to teach and mentor adults, youth, and children in their spiritual walk. The following people will be recognized:

Adult Education: Chad Carlson, George & Gail De Graaf, Van Harden, Kevin Heer, Dan Marvin, Michael & Sasha Mudlaff, Paul Nelson, Kevin Riggins, Mona Yentes

New Life (Youth Ministry): Bryce Boston, Alex Kloppenstien, Steve Randall, Alex Stanbrough, Amy Withers

Nursery: Anastasia Admussen, Aubrey Alshouse, Barb Asman, Peggy Brady, Sarah Brumfield, Stephanie Dickinson, Benae Duff, Amanda Hagenow, Ellen Harrison, Rachel Heer, Marillyn McCulloch, Jennie Meza, Jodi Pieper, Erica Scheve, Sarah Sharp, Heather Sonnichsen, Amy & Shyanne Soper, Rene Van Gundy, Myra Verros, Sherie Whitehead

Preschool, Kindergarten & First Grade: Linda Wilde, Karen Admussen

Second, Third, & Fourth Grade: Brian Dixon, Eric Willcox

Fifth & Sixth Grade: Darrell & Linda Aldrich

Summer Sunday School: Kevin & Robin Riggins

BLAST: Amanda Carlson, Steve Randall

WOW: Jennie Meza, Sasha Mudlaff, Erica Scheve, Nancy Schmidt, Lee & Melinda Turnbull, Jerry & Sandy Tuinstra

Kids of the Kingdom: Vicki Bone, Monica Brown, Amanda Carlson, Benae Duff, Gloria Huyser, Jodi Pieper, Erica Scheve, Sarah Sharp, Danika & Karissa Stadlander, Mallory Wickemeyer

Kid's Own Worship: Karen Admussen, Vicki Bone, Pam Brown, Barry & Sharon Johnson, Sasha Mudlaff, Ashley Norem, Hugh Sheppard, Sherie Whitehead, Drew Willcox

We apologize if we inadvertently omitted any names!

Parenting Seminar: How Our Children Come to Faith will be the topic of a weekend long parenting seminar September 18-20 with guest speaker Stephen Smallman. Contact Steve Randall if you would like to help plan this exciting weekend.

We are always looking for more members on our **Christian Education Commission**. We need people who are interested in discussing the activities of all ages - the children, the teens, and the adults. Please join us!

*. . . Sandy Tuinstra,
Christian Education Commission Deacon*



Children's Ministry

Children's Worship Sunday: Thank you to all the children who did a marvelous job leading worship on Mother's Day. Special thanks to all the adults who assisted including Gloria Huyser, Sasha Mudlaff, Gail De Graaf, Elaine Erickson, Pastor Michael, Elaine Hurst, and Myra Verros! Thanks also to Hamilton Funeral Homes for printing the bulletins.

Summer Sunday School: Beginning June 7, children in grades 1-6 will meet in the fifth and sixth grade classroom for **My Faith & My Career**. Each Sunday a different adult will visit with the children about how their faith is reflected in their life and their job. Children in preschool and kindergarten will meet in their own classroom for Bible stories, crafts, snacks, songs and games.

Ministry & Mission Week: June 15-19 BLAST & CLUB 56 will be teaming up for a week of projects to benefit the church, our community, and Christians around the world. We will meet at church each afternoon and then have a celebration at the end of the week. Projects include making cards, fleece blankets, assembling Samaritan's Purse gift boxes, picking up trash and giving a talent show at a retirement home. On the last day we'll go to Clive Aquatic Center for some well-earned fun.

Twin Lakes Bible Camp: "Inside Out: Is it in you? Let it out" is the theme for this year's camp.

The following children from our church will be attending:

SALT/Servant & Leadership Training (June 14-July 10)

Senior High (June 28-July 3) Olivia Eyerly, Ashley Norem

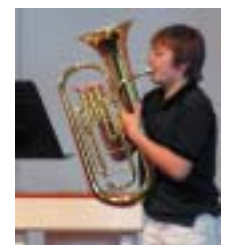
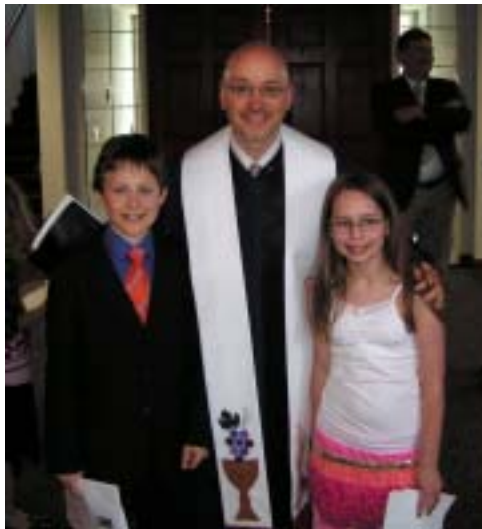
Junior High (July 12-17) Anna Admussen, Elizabeth Leonard

Adventure (July 5-10) Micah Mudlaff, Eli Norem, Nathan Vis

Please pray that these children will have an enjoyable, safe time at camp and learn more about having their heart right before God so that any change that needs to happen in their lives comes from the inside out.

Promotion: Congratulations to the following sixth graders who will finally graduate into BLAST, Westkirk's middle school program (Believing, Laughing, And Studying the Truth). They have been waiting for a long time and we thank them for their patience as the middle school program has evolved over the years from 5th-9th grade to 7th-8th grade. Beginning Sunday, June 7, these teens will meet in the youth room for Sunday School: Anna Admussen, Alysia Bone, Monica Brown, Ryan Hansen, Nathan Hoepker, Elizabeth Leonard, Ben Moss, Brooke Sonnichsen and Mallory Wickemeyer.

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



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

Chuck Heitbrink, Fran Nugteren

Bob Schmadeke, Genevieve Stogdill

Joan Thompson

Staff of Westkirk

Pastor - Michael Mudlaff

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

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