

Westminster Presbyterian Church

1285 3rd Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

319-366-7185

319-366-7187 (Fax)

www.crwpc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Worship Times

Sunday

8:00 a.m. traditional service in the Chapel

9:00 a.m. contemporary service in the Family Life Center

11:00 a.m. traditional service in the Sanctuary

Communion is served on the first weekend of each month.

Head of Staff, Rev. Dr. Katie Hopper: revdrkatie@crwpc.org

Associate Pastor Jim Langley: jlangley@crwpc.org

Director of Christian Education, A.J. Plummer: cedirector@crwpc.org

Director of Student Ministries, Stan Letscher: studentministries@crwpc.org

Finance Manager, Larry Bachman: lbachman@crwpc.org

Church Secretary, Christina Anderson: westmin@crwpc.org



December 2011

Issue 12



THOUGHTS FROM THE HEART OF PASTOR KATIE

Christmas is a time for pretty decorations and lights. In preparing for the season, we do a lot to make our homes look festive. Advent is about preparing our hearts for God to be born in them anew. What do we do to prepare our lives? We hang many ornaments about the house. What type of ornament are we?

A Tarnished Ornament?

Have you seen those Christmas ornaments that are beautiful, but you pick them up and all the paint and glitter comes off. Have we been rubbed the wrong way a few times this year? Have we lost our luster and become tarnished by life? Maybe we have had a disagreement with a friend or family member and lost some of our joy.

An Ugly Ornament?

There are some ornaments that just are plain ugly. We aren't ugly, but sometimes we harbor some real ugliness inside. We can have an ugly attitude. We can speak ugly words or wear ugly expressions. Sometimes we just reflect ugliness. Perhaps we always have a negative outlook and project it on everyone and everything around us.

A Broken Ornament?

Are you broken or falling apart this Christmas season? Perhaps we have had a significant loss in our life this past year. Perhaps our life is filled with problems right now? Sometimes we get our lives broken and we are falling apart because we don't have our priorities in the right place or don't depend on Christ as we should. We think we can hold ourselves together, but instead we fragment and break.

A Packed Away Ornament?

These ornaments have lost their usefulness. They are hidden away and never taken out to be used again. Got some dust on us? Are there cobwebs crisscrossing our spiritual lives? This doesn't happen all at once. We loose a little at a time of our passion and excitement for Christ. We move farther and farther from doing things with and for Christ and fellowshiping with other believers. We may come to worship, but it is just going through the motions for us.

A Faith-filled Ornament?

This is the ornament we would all like to be. The kind that builds up the body of Christ and reflects all that is lovely; an ornament that beautifies and adorns everything around it. It requires that we have the right kind of heart. It requires that we be meek enough, that God can work in and through us. Oh, to have that kind of heart. There are so many verses in scripture that talk about the heart and God wanting to inhabit our hearts. So what kind of ornament do you want to be this Advent and Christmas season. Will you be a true reflection of the love that is Christmas. God's ornament is a flaming heart held in his hand outstretched to the world, to you and me. That flaming heart, on fire with love for us, is Christ the child of the manger, the Savior of humankind. Be a Faith-filled Ornament and hang a heart on your tree this year to remind you who Jesus really is – the flaming heart of God.

Thank you for being a church that loves to teach and share God's love with everyone. Know that I love you each more dearly as time passes. My prayer is that you will have a blessed and love-filled Christmas and that you and your family will be touched deeply by the love of the Christ Child in our midst. Don't forget to teach the children.

All my love and care,
Pastor Katie

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

E-Mail: westmin@crwpc.org

Fax: 319-366-7187

PHONE: 319-366-7185

1285 Third Avenue South East
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403-4084

A MONTHLY NEWS PUBLICATION

THE VOICE OF WESTMINSTER

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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JOTTINGS FROM PASTOR JIM

As the crow flies, it was a journey of about 80 miles, but traveling over hills, through villages and around rivers would likely have made the trip even longer. Christmas card dreams always show the young girl riding a donkey, being led by her husband, but we really don't know how Mary and Joseph got from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Whatever the case, whether on foot or riding an old sway-backed mule, it wasn't an easy journey, especially for a woman nearing the end of her pregnancy.

Why did Mary and Joseph go? True, the Roman government had decreed that a census was to be taken and that everyone must go to one's "own city," the place their families called home, for this official registration and counting. But would anyone have known if Mary and Joseph just chose to stay home? Or maybe Mary was just plain ready to leave the village of Nazareth where tongues were wagging about her pregnancy and unmarried status.

But Mary and Joseph knew they were going far from family, into a city whose streets would be clogged with strangers. They were assured of no warm welcome, no excited relatives awaiting their arrival, no cozy place to birth the expected child. Perhaps they *hoped* for a small house or a distant relative or a way for Joseph to earn money for their room and board, but in almost every way, they were traveling into the unknown. The journey was long and hard, the destination uncertain.

Nearly nine months before their arrival in Bethlehem, Mary had spoken life-changing words to God, words that were to comfort her in the many uncertain years ahead. "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." With those simple words of faith, she could endure the long journey on the back of a donkey, the cold streets of Bethlehem, the staring faces of strangers, and even the crude stable with its straw-lined manger.

What about us? We live in uncertain times. Fear and anxiety cloud our vision. How can we step out in faith and embrace God's call in our lives? Where is our Bethlehem...that unknown place to which God calls us? Has your path been long, the people uncaring, the circumstances burdensome? When we submit ourselves as servants to a loving God, we can—in quietness and confidence—add our own "let it be with me according to your word" to what God is calling us to do...no matter the place or position in which we find ourselves.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Pastor Jim

ADVENT WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONAL BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE

Thank you so much for those in the congregation who contributed daily devotionals and to Christina for getting all the material together and printed. The booklets contain Advent devotional materials as well as orders of worship for each Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve. Copies are also in all areas of worship for Sunday services and may be taken home after Christmas Eve. Copies have also been delivered to your homes.

ONE SERVICE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11TH FOR CHRISTMAS CANTATA!

We will only have one service on Sunday, December 11th at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. The Chancel Choir will be offering a Cantata and the children of the church will be presenting a special Nativity during this service. Please join us!

NEW FRIENDSHIP PADS NOW AVAILABLE

You may have noticed that we now have new friendship pads available in each worship area. These new pads are for any current members who may have prayer concerns/requests, or who have contact information changes, as well as visitors.

MANY THANKS!!!

On Sunday, November 27th, a fearless crew of Christmas elves gathered to decorate the church for Advent and Christmas. Thank you to everyone who came out for this wonderful afternoon of fun, food, and fellowship. We hope it brightened your holiday season the same way it beautified the church for Advent and Christmas!

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR DECEMBER 2011

8:00 a.m. Greeters/Usher

December 4 Jack & Nancy Haney
December 11 Bob & Carol Ferguson
December 18 Jim McWhinney & Connie Hayes
December 25 J.P. & Becky Ranck

9:00 a.m. Greeters/Ushers

December 4 Dave Marner & Gayle Elliott
December 11 Kirk & Rhae Lampe
December 18 Adrienne Walls & Sherry Cornish
December 25 Ted & Lois Kahler

11:00 a.m. Head Usher

Scott Olson

11:00 a.m. Greeters

December 4 Richard & Sherry Cornish
December 11 Dale & Sherry Weiske
December 18 Suzanne Huebsch & Luman Colton
December 25 Bill Wilding & Fran Hanzel Johnson

11:00 a.m. Ushers

December 4 John Henderson, Signe Munson, Lemi Tilahun, Mike & Nancy Walker
December 11 Tony & Suzanne Huebsch, Tamene Gelashe, Gary & Vicki Owens
December 18 Luman Colton, Nick Groves, Bryan Hawkins, Herb & Carm Hammerberg
December 25 Dick Trotter, Betty VanFossen, Velma Kintzel, Jim & Cheryl Shanklin

Offering Stewards

December 4 Dale Crosier & Mark Johnson
December 5 Martha Griffith
December 11 Kathie Lane & John Swanson
December 12 Connie Hayes
December 18 Mike Zimmermann & Deanna Long
December 19 Ed Brunsting
December 25 Martha Wilding & Steve Allard
December 27 Connie Hayes

Nursery Volunteers

9:00 a.m.
December 4 Tricia Brown
December 11 Kim Langley
December 18 Katie Carfizzi
December 25 Jacqueline Fashimpaur

10:00 a.m.

December 4 Andrea Schoenbeck
December 11 TBA
December 18 Alisa Shields
December 25 Shelly Teberg

11:00 a.m

December 4 Molly & Megan Teberg
December 11 Hailey Voyek
December 18 Paula Maddy
December 25 James Bruce

Computer at 9:00 Service

December 4 Chad Gammon
December 11 Doug Wagner
December 18 Julio Martinez
December 25 Jacob Alff

Liturgist

December 4 Jack Sedlacek
December 11 Kim Langley
December 18 Alisa Shields
December 25 Dale Crosier

Handicap Host / Flower Delivery

December 4 Nancy Hawkins
December 11 Gingie Hunstad
December 18 Signe Munson
December 25 Deacons

Coffee Hosts

December 4 Jack & Joyce Sedlacek
December 11 Sandra Yarrington & Bill Wilding
December 18 DJ & Abbie Smith
December 25 John Henderson & Dee Davis

9:00 a.m. Communion Servers

Jackie Alff, Jan Naxera, Ted & Lois Kahler

11:00 a.m. Communion Servers

Vicki Owens, Tony Huebsch, Eileen Naber, Dale Crosier, Bob & Carol Ferguson, Kay Basler, Berta Mullin, Randy Walton

Communion Prep

Marcia Elhart, Joanna Koza, Gloria Kromminga

Communion Clean Up

Beth Roof, Bob & Brenda Warner

STUDENT MINISTRIES NEWS

Confirmation Class

Confirmation class continues to meet in Classroom 3 downstairs on Sunday Mornings from 10-11 a.m. Topics for the month of December include: If God has already predestined me to heaven or hell, why does it matter what I do?; What's so great about doing things decently together and in order?; Are we reformed or reforming? A special mission event is planned for Saturday December 10th for confirmation students. We will be ringing bells for the Salvation Army at Sam's Club on Blairs Ferry Road from 12-2pm. We will meet at church around 9:30 on Saturday the 10th and then drive out to Sam's Club. We should be back to church around 2:15pm.

Emmaus

Senior High Sunday School meets on Sunday mornings in the youth room from 10-11 a.m. On Sunday December 4th, we will explore the question: How do demons and Angels influence my world? Then on December 11th & December 18th we will be watching and discussing the video The Star of Bethlehem which explores the exciting truth of scripture and reveals the evidence of God's existence as seen in the stars above. Presenter Rick Larson will walk us through Biblical and historical clues revealing the incredible significance of this celestial event as well as the vastness of God's creativity. For Emmaus on Sunday evening December 4th, we will be meeting at 6:30pm to have some time to discuss our upcoming mission trip and share in some food with one another. On Sunday December 11th from 6-8pm we will be gathering to bake Christmas cookies for shut-ins. On Sunday December 18th from 6-8pm we will be delivering cookies and Christmas caroling to shut-ins.

EnterActive

During our Wednesday evening time together on December 7th & 14th, the middle school students will be making name tag buttons that they will be able to wear on Sunday mornings.

Student Ministries Christmas Party

Middle school & high school students please join us on Wednesday evening December 21st from 6-8pm for our annual Christmas Party. Please bring a snack to share with the group, Stan will provide the drinks for the evening. We will also be having a White Elephant Gift Exchange, so please find an item around your house that your parents want to get rid of or maybe an item you don't want anymore and wrap it up to bring and give at the gift exchange.

"COLLEGE AGE" DINNER WITH PASTOR KATIE

We would like to invite any and all college aged individuals to a once a month gathering with Pastor Katie at a local eatery to fellowship and plan other fun or inspirational outings. Pastor Katie will meet our college age young adults for dinner on December 22nd at 9:00 p.m. following the Blue Christmas Service at church. Be sure and bring our students that are home for Christmas for fun and food and fellowship. We will meet at Buffalo Wild Wings on the Westside. If you need a ride, please contact Pastor Katie or the Church Office.

SPECIAL OFFICE HOURS

The Church Office will close at 12:00 noon on Friday, December 23rd and will remain closed on Monday, December 26th. Happy Holidays!



CHURCH CHATTER FOR CHILDREN

Sunday School/Logos Cancellations

There will be no Sunday School on Sunday, December 11th in order to accommodate the single service for the Cantata. Additionally, there will be no Sunday School on December 25th and January 1st in observance of winter break. There will also be no Logos on Wednesday, December 21st and Wednesday, December 28th. Logos will resume the following week on January 4th.

Christmas Cantata for Kids

On Sunday, December 11th there will be one combined service at 10:00 A.M. to join in worship together through a Christmas Cantata. This cantata is designed with kids in mind, and we'll need lots of help from your kids as they re-enact the Nativity story throughout the cantata. There will be a rehearsal for those kids interested in participating on Saturday, December 10th. More specific details will be communicated as they become known. Please mark your calendars and plan on joining us for this special event!

We need your help!

We're getting close! The time is nearly upon us. On Saturday, December 3rd from 2-4 P.M. our friends and neighbors of Wellington Heights will descend upon us for our annual Toy Give-Away. But we need your help to make this year a success! There are several ways that you can help. First, you can sign up on the bulletin board outside the office for a two hour shift during the event itself. Help us wrap toys, build relationships, and make Christmas miracles happen. Or, second, you could help by donating any of the items below from the Toy Give-Away Wish List. These are all items that are needed still for the event. *OR*, third, you can still donate new or gently used toys that will be given directly to a child in need on the day of the event.

Wish List:

Batteries (especially AA), Wrapping Paper, Bows, Ribbon, Present Tags, Scissors, Packing Tape/Guns Scotch tape, Boxes of all sizes, Present Bags (for large gifts)

\$5 Footlong Challenge Update

With the challenge for the Sunday School kids to memorize bible verses and earn a lunch visit with Mr. A.J. underway, we have our first winner of a \$5 Footlong Subway Sandwich! Ben Wilding successfully memorized 5 bible verses and is awaiting his lunch visit with Mr. A.J. There are more verses to be remembered and more subs to be eaten, so keep helping the kids with their memory verses!

Camp Wyoming Wintertainment

With the weather turning cooler, it's time to think about what you'll be doing during the winter break. Join us for a great WINTER experience at Camp Wyoming! Enjoy Winter Olympics, the famous Tubing Hill, morning worship services, evening campfires and much more! This is a great chance to reunite with friends from the summer and a wonderful opportunity to make new ones. Print registration materials online at <http://www.campwyoming.net/> Registration deadline is December 21, 2011.

Thank you!

Thank you to all those who helped make the Toy Give-Away a success this year! It could not have happened without each individual's dedication. A special thank you to Wendy Marner & Sharon Galing, who organized and sanitized all the toys.

Hey y'all,

As I head into the final stretch of this semester, I am looking forward to coming home! November has been a relentless month of school work but I am managing fine. I recently visited a mosque for their Friday prayer services as part of my class on Islam. I don't think I will be converting, but I will say I have gained a newfound respect for the religion and have learned a great deal about its beliefs and its similarities and differences with Christianity. When I return, I plan on visiting the Mother Mosque on 9th Street downtown. Did you know it is the first mosque in North America? Perhaps I will get extra credit...

In January, as part of a required travel course, I will be heading to Kingston, Jamaica for about two and a half weeks. We will be staying at the United Theological College of the West Indies where we will learn about the country of Jamaica, its cultural, political, and religious landscapes. It should be an exciting trip and as it will be my first trip out of the country (Canada doesn't count). I know it will give me a completely different view of the world.

I finish classes December 9th and will have finals the following week. Depending upon that schedule, I could be back by Sunday the 18th but if not I will certainly be back for Christmas. My fiancée, Jennie Smith, will be joining me this Christmas so I hope you have a chance to meet her! This will be my last update before coming home!

See you soon!

Steve Sankey



PLEASE JOIN US IN OUR
"WALK TO JERUSALEM"
Sponsored by the Health Ministries Team



What? Walk to Jerusalem is a 12-week exercise program to promote physical and spiritual well-being. The goal is for the congregation as a group to accumulate enough miles of exercise to walk from Cedar Rapids to Jerusalem by Easter. That is 6,349.9 miles!

How? You can either count the miles that you walk or run, or 15 minutes of any aerobic activity (e.g. swimming, biking, cardio machines, team sports, tennis, etc.) equals 1 mile of walking/running. For pedometer users: 2,200 steps = a mile. Keep track of your miles (to the nearest ¼ mile) on the Physical Activity Log and e-mail your totals to the church by Tuesday of each week at westmin@crwpc.org with "Walk to Jerusalem" in the Subject line or drop them off each Sunday in a designated box.

Who? Anyone! We encourage you to use this program as an opportunity to exercise as family, with friends and co-workers, with people in your neighborhood group, and with other church members.

When? Participants can officially start keeping track of their miles on **Sunday, January 8** and finish on **EASTER – APRIL 8TH**.

Why? To commit to improved physical, spiritual, and emotional health in 2012.

YOU CAN PICK UP YOUR LOG AND DEVOTIONALS AT A SIGN-UP TABLE
BEGINNING IN DECEMBER AND CONTINUING THROUGHOUT THE WALK.

HAVE FUN!
TOGETHER WE CAN REACH JERUSALEM

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)



LOAVES AND FISHES FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

DECEMBER - SUGAR (BROWN OR WHITE), FLOUR, PINEAPPLE, BAKING POWDER/SODA,
NON-STICK SPRAY, SHAVING CRÈME & RAZORS
CANNED & BOXED FOOD; NO JARS PLEASE. STANDARD SIZE CANS,
AS MOST OF OUR GUESTS WALK TO THE PANTRY.
TOILET PAPER & PERSONAL PRODUCTS ALWAYS NEEDED.

LOAVES & FISHES NEWS

The Food Pantry has been very busy this year! With a great staff of volunteers, every Tuesday is fun and we meet so many new families. Special events have been going on, as well, and each and everyone is very thankful and appreciative of the nutritional food, adult clothing, bed and bath items, and the winter blanket give-aways. Here's a new and fun way you can help out going into next year!

It's a COUPON-EXTRAVAGANZA! Venture out and jump on the "extreme couponing" band wagon with Loaves & Fishes! Yes, it's free and it will be helping with next year's food budget. Start TODAY and drop off your grocery coupons in either of the Loaves & Fishes food baskets.

We are also accepting new or slightly used adult clothing to be given away on a weekly basis to those who may need them. Winter clothing items are in special need right now. Because we have limited space for storage, please carefully select what you donate. The Blanket Give-Away date changed to a time in January, so we are still collecting sleeping bags, sheets, blankets and comforters. Any size will be accepted!

Thank you for your continued support of this very important neighborhood ministry. We help 145 families which totals an average of 375-550 people per week and we could not do this without the help of Westminster and Christ Episcopal Church.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

For almost 70 years, the Christmas Joy Offering has been an important tradition in the Presbyterian Church. It is one of three special offerings taken by Westminster throughout the year and 50% of the offering goes to assist retired and active church workers and their spouses and families who need additional assistance due to health or disability problems. The remaining 50% supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education through the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly. This year we will collect the offering during worship on December 11th and 18th.

You Are Invited

To attend the Wedding Ceremony of

Josiane Uwera & Hamou Soumare

On Saturday, the seventeenth of December
at Westminster Presbyterian Church in the Sanctuary
at two o'clock in the afternoon
with Reverend Doctor Katie Hopper presiding.

Reception will follow in the Family Life Center.



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

The 13th Annual Community-Wide Alternative Gift Market will be on Saturday, December 3rd, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Coe College. The Alternative Gift Market is a great place for “alternative” shopping, especially when searching for a gift for someone who has everything! You can even purchase “alternative” gifts for our own Loaves & Fishes and Kids’ Closet! Don’t miss out!

PASTOR KATIE’S PERIODIC WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY BEGINS!:

Please note the abbreviated schedule for December due to the holiday season. We gather with the youth on Sundays at 6:30 pm for the adult Bible study with Pastor Katie. For those unable to attend on Sunday evenings, the Bible study portion from Sunday nights is repeated by Pastor Katie on Wednesdays at 10:00 am. The adult study continues with its theme, “Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol Advent Bible Study.”

Week one: Sun. Dec. 4th and Wed. Dec. 7th
Week two: Sun. Dec. 11th and Wed. Dec. 14th
Week three: Sun. Dec. 18th and Wed. Dec. 21st.

PASTOR KATIE TO TRAVEL TO TEXAS

Pastor Katie will leave the afternoon of Christmas Day to join her family in San Antonio, Texas for their annual New Year’s family celebration with Communion at First Presbyterian there and time spent with her husband’s parents and in a night of Big Band music and dancing and bringing in the new year in style. Pray for her safe travel and time of renewal. Pastor Jim will be preaching the first Sunday of January.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE=STEWARDSHIP

Help make your holidays greener! Holidays generally mean more trash, but there are a few things you can do to cut down on the number of extra garbage stickers you have to buy this holiday season.

Wrapping and tissue paper cannot go in your Curby. So, as always, please consider the use of gift bags which can be reused for years ahead. Fold and reuse tissue paper too. Or wrap presents in newspaper or old maps (recyclable) or in cloth or a decorative towel. If every American family wrapped just three gifts in reusable materials, it would save enough paper to cover nearly 50,000 football fields. Another thought is to shred used wrapping paper to use as packing material for decorations.

Fruit and vegetable peelings from your holiday meals should go in the Yardy. Tops of celery and carrots, onion skins, orange and grapefruit rinds and other excess plant material may be put in the Yardy year round.

Keep FOG out of the water stream. Fat + Oil + Grease = FOG. When cooking oil, gravy, salad dressing, bacon grease, etc. make their way into our sewer system, we all pay for it. When FOG builds up in sewer pipes, manholes overflow, sewers back up and repairs are expensive. Avoid pouring FOG into your sink or toilet. Pour FOG into a can. When the can is full, throw it into the trash. Wipe FOG residues from pots and pans with a paper towel before washing, and throw the towel in the trash.

Remember old strings of lights should not go in the garbage. Please take them to either CR/Linn Co Solid Waste Agency location and recycle them for free. Do not put them in your recycling container at home. [The hints above are from the CR City Newsletter.]

Have a blessed Christmas and New Year, and show your thanks for our wonderful world by helping our environment as you are able.

Marilyn Lodge

LIFE GROUP NEWS FROM PASTOR JIM

LIFE Group leaders, be sure to keep an eye on your email inbox. I’ve put together a monthly e-newsletter that’s full of helpful information, leadership lifters and tips you can use with your groups. A new small group curriculum will also be highlighted in each newsletter that your group might consider using at some point.

And as for curriculum...beginning in January, Pastor Katie will be starting a series of messages on a book called “*Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations.*” A DVD and study guides are also available with the book. I would encourage you to consider using this as your group’s first study of the new year! Let me know if you’d like me to order copies for your group!

MINISTRY TEAM AND CHURCH ORGANIZATION REPORTS AND STAFF GOALS DUE IN JANUARY

It will be time very soon to put together our Annual Report for the year of 2011. This is always a special way for us to celebrate the ministry of the past year and reflect one where we see God’s hand in our lives at Westminster Presbyterian Church. This year Pastor Katie will be adding a new section to our Annual Report. Each Pastoral Staff member will be asked to also submit their goals for 2012 to be printed for the Annual Report. Reports from all ministry teams and groups in the church will be due in the office on Sunday, January 8th. Those failing to meet the deadline will be volunteering to do the copying of the report. =)

MABEL WOITO CELEBRATES 103RD BIRTHDAY!

Mabel Woito has been a member of Westminster for 68 years and will be celebrating her 103rd birthday on Saturday, December 21st. All are invited to a celebration party on Saturday, December 17th at Denver Sunset Home, 235 N. Mill St. #23, Denver, Iowa 50622. Cards would be greatly appreciated as well. If you have any questions, please call Mabel’s daughter, Dixie, at 319-984-6473.



From the Knitting Basket...

Knit Your Way to Wellness! The obvious benefits of knitting are the scarves, shawls, mittens and hats we produce. But there’s more! Knitting can be a form of meditation by focusing on a single object or thought and the repetitive motion of the stitch. Meditation can reduce your blood pressure and heart rate. It can help you relax and possibly improve your immune system. Knitting can divert your mind from unhealthy habits. If you are trying to stop smoking, knitting can keep your hands busy. If your dieting, it can help you delay or eliminate that extra snack. So, if you’re thinking of making a commitment to stop an unhealthy habit....try knitting!

From: Dr. Loretta Meske, “The Knitting Doctor” on her internet blog: mousepotato.typepad.com

Lynda Smith

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS

Order forms to order a poinsettia to be displayed around the church during the weeks before Christmas are now available. All orders must be into the Church Office by NOON on Monday, December 5th. The poinsettias may be taken home on Christmas Day, Sunday December 25th, or donated to a shut-in to enjoy. Pricing will be available on the order form, or you can call the Church Office for more information. **Orders must be in the Church Office no later than NOON on Monday, December 5th.**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Don Harlan	19 Barb Moss
2 Sarah Coleman	19 David Jiruska
2 Chase Philpott	19 Claire Bemus
2 Robert Shoemaker	20 Barb Coppock
4 Joanne Koza	20 Linda Kellar
4 Molly Engels	20 Valeta Whitehead
5 Minni Strickler	21 Mabel Woito
5 Donald Zvacek	21 Jim Langley
5 Darlene Elbert	22 Evan Hataway
6 Amelia Denning	22 Ted Paulson
6 Dawn Schuettpelez	22 Jim Wright
7 Doug Horton	22 Jim Loomis
8 Marcus Coleman	23 Brenda Miller
8 Audrey Fashimpaur	23 Dorie Scott
8 Ky Greeno	24 Joanne Peterson
9 Elizabeth Haars	24 Maggie Lampe
9 Chris Keeran	25 Michael Wright
10 Ibsa Tilahun	25 Brenda Warner
10 Shane McCrane	25 Grant Dolmage
11 Bradley George	26 Frank Fowler
11 Trent Marner	26 Mark Moss
11 Elizabeth Sankey	27 Chuck Davis
12 Bryant Conkling	27 Karen Humbert
13 Leslie Crozier	27 Joan Snow
13 Robert Richardson	27 Ryan Oliver
14 Jerry Hewitt	28 Scott Olson
14 Karen George	28 Kenneth Lee
14 Velma Kintzel	28 Elise Fashimpaur
14 Gloria Ruzicka	29 Ed Bock
14 Jake Wilding	29 Carol Ferguson
14 Susan Bowersox	29 Blaine Neubauer
16 Steve Peterson	29 John Conkling
16 Dale Davisson	30 Darcy Caraway
16 Todd Shields	30 Matt Ironside
16 Terry Shaffer	30 Charlene McCrane
17 CharLes Klouda	30 Zach Thies
17 Janis Kiley	31 Jennica Foley
17 Feyisa Tilahun	31 Emily Snow
18 Jordan Ripley	31 Georden Maddy
18 Isaac Langley	31 Olivia Lee
19 Grace Gravelie	



WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, December 4th - 2nd Sunday of Advent
Communion

All Services - Pastor Katie Hopper
"Mary's Story"
Text: Luke 1:26-56

Sunday, December 11th - 3rd Sunday of Advent

Christmas Cantata
Presented by the Chancel Choir
and the Children of the Church

Sunday, December 18th - 4th Sunday of Advent

All Services - Pastor Jim Langley
"The Angel's Song"
Text: Luke 2.1-14

Thursday, December 22nd - Blue Christmas Service

7:00 p.m. Service - Pastor Katie Hopper
"No More Tears"

Saturday, December 24th - Christmas Eve

5:30 and 11:00 p.m. Service
Pastor Katie Hopper
"Rachel and the Shepherdess"
Text: Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 25th - Christmas Day

One Service at 10:00 a.m.
Pastor Katie Hopper
"Mary's Box"
Text: Matthew 1:18-25

December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:15 am Kindred Spirits	2 Pastoral Staff Sabbath 9:30 am Women at the Well	3 9:00 am Alt. Gift Market @ Coe 2:00 pm Kids' Closet/ Toy Drive
4 2nd Sunday of Advent SMA 6:30 pm Christmas Carol Bible Study 6:30 pm Emmaus 8:00 pm Perpetual Life Grp	5 6:30 pm Invite to John LG 6:30 pm Shawl Ministry	6 9:00 am Pastoral Meeting 9:00 am FLC in Use (Horizons Band) 9:30 am Bible Study 10:00 am Staff Mtg 3:30 pm Loaves & Fishes	7 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 9:30 am 3rd Ave Churches (WNA) 10:00 am Pastor Bible Study	8 10:00 am Methwick Visit 5:30 pm Health Ministries	9 Pastoral Staff Sabbath 9:30 am Women at the Well 5:30 pm Staff Xmas Dinner	10 9:00 am Cantata Rehearsal 12:00 pm Confirmation Bell Ringing
11 3rd Sunday of Advent One Service at 10:00 am Christmas Program Choir Cantata 6:30 Pastor Bible Study 6:00 pm Emmaus 8:00 pm Perpetual Life Grp	12 11:00 am PEO in Atrium (Schultz) 5:30 pm Adult Ed 6:30 pm Invite to John	13 9:00 am Pastoral Meeting 9:30 am Bible Study 10:00 am Staff Mtg 3:30 pm Loaves & Fishes 5:30 pm CMT Mtg 6:30 p.m. Mission Mtg	14 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 9:15 am CR Child's Theatre 10:00 am Pastor Bible Study WNA	15 9:15 am Kindred Spirits 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service 9:00 pm College Aged Din.	16 Pastoral Staff Sabbath 9:30 am Women at the Well 9:30 am Naomi/Esther 5:30 pm Wedding Rehearsal Newsletter Deadline	17 2:00 pm Wedding
18 4th Sunday of Advent SMA Logos Worship Offering @ 11 6:30 Pastor Bible Study 6:00 pm Emmaus	19 4:30 pm Finance Meeting 6:30 pm Invite to John LG 6:30 pm Communications	20 9:00 am Pastoral Meeting 9:30 am Bible Study 10:00 am Staff Mtg 3:30 pm Loaves & Fishes 6:30 pm Session Meeting	21 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 9:30 am Martha/Ruth 10:00 am Pastor Bible Study WNA - ? No Logos 6:00 pm EmmAus Xmas	22 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service 9:00 pm College Aged Din.	23 Pastoral Staff Sabbath 9:30 am Women at the Well? Church Office Closes at Noon	24 Christmas Eve 5:30 pm Worship 11:00 pm Worship
25 Christmas Day One Service at 10:00 am	26 Office Closed 6:30 pm Invite to John LG?	27 9:00 am Pastoral Meeting 9:30 am Bible Study 10:00 am Staff Mtg 3:30 pm Loaves & Fishes	28 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 1:00 pm Shawl Ministry No WNA	29 9:15 Kindred Spirits 12:00 pm FLC in Use (Colton)	30 Pastoral Staff Sabbath 9:30 am Women at the Well	31
			Proof Newsletter	Print Newsletter	Mail Newsletter	

SMA—Sunday Morning Activities
8:00 am: Worship in the Chapel
8:30 am: Breakfast
9:00 am: Worship in the FLC
10:00 am: New Member Class
10:00 am: Sunday School
11:00 am: Worship in the Sanctuary

WNA - Wednesday Night Activities
4:00 pm: Logos
6:30 pm: Middle School EnterActive
6:30 pm: Minster Bells
7:30 pm: Chancel Choir
8:15 pm: Cantata Choir Rehearsal

December 16th is the deadline for the January Newsletter. Contact Christina in the office or email your information to westmin@crwpc.org.

PW CIRCLE NEWS

Martha/Ruth Circle will meet on Wednesday, December 21st at 9:30 a.m. at the Village Inn. Please join us for this time of fellowship.

Naomi/Esther Circle will meet on Friday, December 16th at 9:30 a.m. in the Small Parlor. Join as we share our holiday memories!

**SESSION MINUTES
FROM NOVEMBER 18TH MEETING**

At 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 15th, the monthly meeting of the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church was convened with 16 of 19 Elders present.

Notes from the meeting:

- Year-over-year attendance for the month was down for October.
- Our finances are comparable with recent years and giving outpaced expenditures for the month of October.
- In light of the recent scandal at Penn State University, Pastor Katie reminded the Session that all church officers, past and present, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. Session members were selected to join staff in a review of our 2000 Child Protection Policy.
- Discussion revealed that early indications from Stewardship Sunday efforts were promising.
- As we have depleted our stock of Bibles for 3rd Graders, we will be purchasing new Bibles with an “adventure” theme.
- Session approved curriculum for Middle and High Schoolers.
- Our audio system in the sanctuary is out of compliance with Federal Communication Commission regulations. A plan was presented by which Westminster could purchase a new system and have it installed, bringing us into compliance. Although funding exists to purchase the system, the plan was tabled until next months meeting so that the Finance and Memorial Committees might have the opportunity to review where the funding might come from.
- Approved two new members to be brought into the congregation and discussed several additional potential members.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Wagner
Clerk of Session

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

The carols, the candles, the joy of being surrounded by family and friends, the anticipation on each child’s face...they are all an important part of Christmas. We hope you will join us for either (or both!) of our Candlelight Christmas Eve services on Friday, December 24th, as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Pastor Katie will be preaching at the 5:30 p.m. service and we will have beautiful, special music and a time with the children of the church. At the 11:00 p.m. service, Pastor Katie will be preaching and the Chancel Choir will provide several beautiful anthems. We hope you will celebrate the joy of the season with us on Christmas Eve this year!

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

One of the new things that Pastor Katie is bringing to our Advent season is a special service for those who find this Christmas and all its celebration to be difficult this year for one reason or another. Started by Stephen Ministers across the country, this service allows grieving and suffering families a place to lean into the true Christmas story, which takes place in a real world where people hurt and babies are murdered and God really does care. Invite anyone you know for whom this will be a difficult season to come and join us for a Blue Christmas worship in the Chapel at 7:00 p.m. on December 22nd.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Our church family will gather on Christmas morning to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Pastor Katie will be bringing a very special Children’s sermon – which will be the message. It is called “Mary’s Box.” It is reflections of Mary to one of her granddaughters many years after that special night in the Manger.

Take time from your family celebrations, to remember whose birthday it really is. Come to worship at 10:00 a.m. for one service only.



WESTMINSTER CANCELLATION POLICY



Whether or not you love the snow, it is inevitably going to come! If Sunday services are cancelled due to inclement weather, we will make every attempt to contact the following television stations: KCRG (Channel 9), KGAN (Channel 2) and KWVL (Channel 7). The Church’s Facebook Page will have the latest updates, and there may also be a message on the Church’s voicemail, so you can call to double-check.

Wednesday night children and youth activities will be cancelled if the Cedar Rapids Public Schools have been cancelled or dismissed early due to bad weather. Please contact the Church Office if you aren’t sure.

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
DECEMBER OFFERINGS**

The Adult Education team is developing a three-week class centered on mission work. The concept for this class is to educate Westminster Presbyterian Church members on mission work opportunities in our community and then put it into action! We will ask the congregation for donations of winter clothing (gloves, hats, socks, mittens, etc), hygiene items (soap, shampoo, shaving crème, razors, deodorant, etc), and blankets. On each of the three Sundays in December, we will have a speaker from a local mission come and talk in regards to their specific mission.

If you would like to join with us in a unique shopping trip, please buy something for yourself from the list below and then duplicate your purchase to bring to church for the Loaves & Fishes Adult Gift Baskets. Many of our friends who have the privilege of getting food each week still have to make difficult choices on what to buy at the store with the money they have left to spend. We want to make that choice easier for them this Christmas and we know you will too! Starting this Sunday, December 4th, look for the baskets in front of the Atrium and watch how fast they fill up!

**Christmas Shopping List
For Men & Women**

Toothpaste	Dental Floss	Toothbrushes	Shampoo
Conditioner	Hair Gel	Razor/Razor Blades	Shaving Crème
Deodorant	Lip Balm	Nail Clippers	Feminine Hygiene Products
Nail Files	Emory Boards	Combs	Nail Polish/Remover
Hairbrushes	Q-Tips	Band-Aids	Aspirin

WHEN TIMES GET TOUGH...

Please know that your church family wants to stand with you and support you. If you find yourself in need of assistance with food, please let one of the pastors know and we will arrange to get you some things from Loaves and Fishes. No one should ever go hungry because they don’t think they can, or don’t want to ask, for help. Arrangements can always be made!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE AND CAN’T MAKE IT?

If you are scheduled to serve on a Sunday and cannot serve on your scheduled day, please find a replacement or someone to switch with you. Please let the Church Office know of any changes by Thursday of each week to ensure that it is printed correctly in the bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the schedule, please call the Church Office at 366-7185 or email Christina at westmin@crwpc.org. Thank you for your willingness to serve!