

## Pastors say healthier marriages bring about better communities

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
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'The Art of Marriage' series offered in Gothenburg.

Marriage has a profound effect on communities, according to two local pastors.

The Revs. Mark Borchardt and Bill Ivey of Gothenburg both believe that strong marriages bring good things to communities.

"In my opinion, healthy marriages are really good for communities, schools, churches and businesses," Ivey said.

Because of their belief that society is built on the foundation of marriage, the two spearheaded a community event using "The Art of Marriage" curriculum in Gothenburg Jan. 18-19.

The series, designed by Family Life, is Christ-based and helps strengthen marriages through six videos that include experts talking about different aspects of marriage and the inclusion of real-life stories.

Hosted in the Gothenburg Public School's performing arts center, 32 couples from Gothenburg and the surrounding area participated in the series.

From the video, both said key elements to a good marriage include:

a shared faith in Christ

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conflict resolution

Borchardt said it's important that couples connect and communicate well and work through their problems.

the meeting of one another's needs

Ivey noted the importance of knowing what each other enjoys.



As an example, Borchardt said he and his wife, Annette, have learned how each other express love whether it's performing service for one another, spending time with each other or other things.

how to keep the flame burning

Every marriage goes through lulls, Ivey said, and suggested that date nights and "romancing your spouse" are important.

Developing emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy is key, he said.

the fulfilling of each other's needs physically

the leaving of a legacy

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Building a strong marriage foundation and leaving that legacy to children and grandchildren is important, Borchardt said.

“Kids can see mom and dad working through a situation and they stick together no matter what the situation is as long as it’s healthy,” he said.

Only recently in the United States has marriage been devalued and challenged, Ivey said, noting that America was built on a foundation of strong marriage.

Borchardt said marriage is about the creation of the next generation and those children growing up and having kids of their own.

“Mom and dad contribute by raising strong children who raise up the next generation,” he said.

For those who marry, “we want the strongest marriage possible,” Ivey said.

The ministers plan to offer the series again this September.

“We had an overwhelming response,” Ivey said.

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