

KIRKWOOD KRONICLE

A Christian Community Growing Together, Knowing, Loving, and Serving Christ,
to make Him known to all.

Dec 2020/Jan 2021

A Message from our Pastor Chris Shearer



The Old Normal, The New Normal, and The Next Normal – Church During and After the Pandemic #2:

In this article, I'd like to give you access to some of the great research going on right now about how our Covid year is affecting and transforming the American church. I'll be summarizing the recent work of four primary researchers: Carey Nieuwhof, The Barna Group, Thom Rainer, and Tony Morgan.

If we want KirkWood to emerge from the pandemic stronger for it, and having learned lessons during it that will carry it forward into a bright future, we'd be wise to heed and apply these insights in a way that suits our distinct congregation.

1) The congregation will be bigger than those who gather at a centralized facility.

As long as there are people, people will gather. But, here's what Covid is teaching us – that won't always be at a centralized facility.

For decades, in-person attendance of worship services and educational classes has been in decline. Likewise over the same time frame, those who are committed to a church have been attending in-person events less often (that is, in your building.) But, and this is crucial, neither necessarily indicates a decline in engagement, devotion, or attachment. In fact, gathering



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Christians in one place at one time (that is, Sunday morning attendance) was never the point of church; engagement, discipleship, and transformation was, and always will be, and that can happen online or in homes as much as at a church building.

Worship: 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. in person or online

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. - children ages 3-5th grade

9:30 a.m. in-person adult and 11:00 a.m. via Zoom (contact church office for link)





Like shopping, work, and school have been altered irrevocably by the internet, so too has church. In fact, the Covid crisis has just accelerated the pace of trends that have been underway for the past 20 years.

To go one step further, churches leaning into the future will realize that on demand learning and involvement outweighs live-streaming/participation. To see the merit of such a claim, just think for a moment about how Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and other on-demand entertainment outlets/sites have completely changed what we watch, how we watch, and when we watch. So archiving older sermons, classes, and learning material online is key, as is offering self-guided resources to go deeper into a subject and using social media frequently and strategically.

As Carey Nieuwhof puts it, “We will use the building to reach people online, not use online to bring people to our building,” and “The digital genie is out of the bottle.”

The future of church shouldn’t be confined to full sanctuaries on Sunday morning; it’s viewing online, engaging in online classes and groups, and micro- or house gatherings. This is where church is going in the 21st-century, especially as the financial base of many churches erodes due to declining attendance and an aging congregation. If this is true, then it’s sobering to realize that before the Covid epidemic, only 21% of churches reported having a coherent, prioritized online ministry strategy (Tony Morgan.)

2) There is generational tension about the future of church.

As reported by The Barna Group, only 40% of Gen Z and millennials prefer attending in-person worship at a centralized facility. That is, those under the age of 39. For Gen X, or Baby Busters, it’s slightly higher.

Now consider this, 71% of Baby Boomers (those in their mid-50s to mid-70s) prefer in-person church worship and groups, representing a 30% gap between them and the younger generations, setting up a generational conflict about the methodology of church going forward.

But this doesn’t have to be an either/or, winner take all issue. Instead, as Carey Nieuwhof suggests, a wise church might have two distinct ministry strategies to reach these two distinct





age ranges – those above 55, and those below 55, or, if you will, those who find the 20th-century version of church more meaningful and those who don't, and prefer a more 21st-century expression. While it's true that in-person gatherings provide an experience and connection that nothing else can, they will comprise less of a younger adult's overall church involvement.

Warmly,
Chris

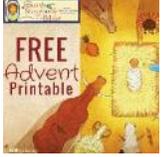
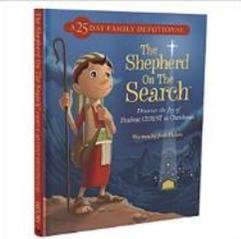
In This Issue

Pastor's Letter	pg. 1-3
Dates	pg. 3
Christian Education	pg. 4, 10
Mission	pg. 4
Outreach	pg. 5-7
Worship	pg. 8-9
KYG	pg. 10-11
Congregational Care	pg. 12
Session	pg. 13

December & January Dates

- December 6 - Second Sunday of Advent
- December 13 - Third Sunday of Advent
- December 20 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 21 - First day of winter
- December 24 - Christmas Eve (services at 5:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.)
- December 25 - Christmas Day
- December 31 - New Year's Eve
- January 1, 2021 - New Year's Day
- January 6 - Epiphany
- January 10 - Baptism of the Lord
- January 16 - Religious Freedom Day
- January 18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 18-25 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- January 20 - Inauguration Day

Advent Resources For Families

	<p>https://www.rotation.org/pages/advent</p> <p>Free links are provided for activities, videos, songs and more. Special sections are provided for young children and for older children</p>
	<p>The Wandering Wiseman, @thewanderingwisemen is an online advent countdown with pictures and whimsical captions while on their quest to find the infant king.</p> <p>View through Facebook or Instagram.</p>
	<p>https://www.faithgateway.com/jesus-storybook-bible-advent-calendar-printable/</p> <p>Make 24 ornaments that correspond with one of the stories in</p>
	<p>https://spelloutloud.com/names-of-jesus-advent-chain.html</p> <p>I have used paper chains to countdown a multitude of events. This paper chain contains 24 names of Jesus.</p>
	<p><u>The Shepherd on the Search</u> is an Elf on the Shelf alternative. The devotional book will help your family feel like a part of the journey the shepherd is on to the manger.</p> <p>\$12 on Amazon</p>

The Christmas Offering

The Christmas Offering will be collected on Sunday, December 13th. This special offering is divided between the Pastor's Fund and York County/Poquoson Social Services. Please prayerfully consider donating to support these two very important missions. Make your check out to KirkWood and please put "**Christmas Fund**" on the memo line. If you have questions, please contact Jen Carter or Elisabeth Kelly.



OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Outreach

We'd like to thank the following people for a fantastic Drive Thru Trick or Treating Event: Arba, Nate, Steve, Hope, Nancy, Wendy, Lisa, Cathy, Jeannine, Julia, June, Kate, Blake, Bill, Roger, Gloria, Cindy, Barbara, Mike, Katie, Shiloh, Heather, Rachel, Emily, and Phil.

We had 143 cars drive through. There were at least two people and kids in each car. Some of the vans had 3-5 kids in them. Everyone was very appreciative of us being there. They took pictures of everyone, and it was so much fun! Thank you to everyone who came and helped decorate the morning of the event, worked the night of the event, and everyone who donated candy. We couldn't have done it without each and every one of you!!

For December - we are going to have the Christmas story of Jesus' birth on our posts around the prayer path in Wee KirkWood. The path will be lit until 7:00 p.m. each night since it gets dark so early this time of year. We're inviting you to use this resource to share the beauty and magic of the season with someone you know.

This is a great opportunity for our Christian Community to grow together, Knowing, Loving and Serving Christ to make him know to all. We hope you are all able to take advantage of sharing the Christmas Story with someone this Holiday season. If you have any questions please email Toni Fisher at fishertl594@gmail.com or text at (719) 237-1156.

Do you have an idea how we can reach out to our Community? Please share with a member of the Outreach Committee - Toni, June, or Rachel. We'd love to hear your ideas.



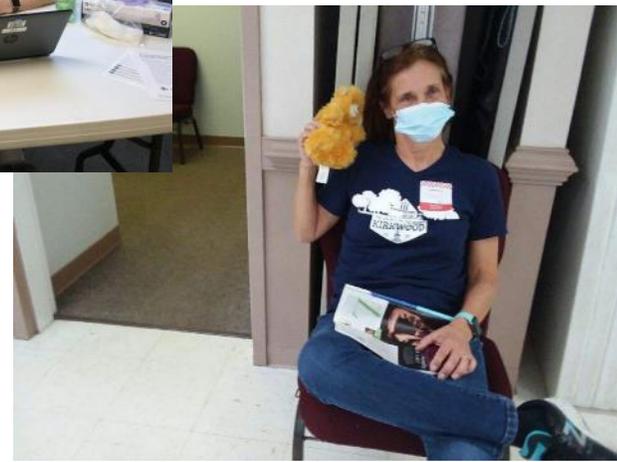
BLOOD DRIVE

Outreach



Blood Drive

The final Red Cross Blood Drive was held at the church on Thursday, November 19th. It was a HUGE success! All Covid protocols were followed during the event. We had 40 presenting donors and were able to collect 43 pints of blood. We had five donors who gave “Power Red” donations, which is two units of blood. We had two deferrals and one donor unable to give. “Stu” even made his rounds through the drive. Thank you to all those who come out to donate or volunteer their time to help make our drives run so smoothly and successfully. We are still unable to serve a meal, but are hoping to resume that ministry in 2021. Our 2021 dates are February 18th, May 20th, August 19th, and November 18th. Please mark your calendars.





This award recognizes you as an extraordinary Blood Program Partner who stood with the American Red Cross during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your dedicated support was essential in our mission to help save lives across the country through blood donation.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail McGovern".

Gail McGovern, President and CEO

2020



**American
Red Cross**

Blood Program Partner



WORSHIP

Worship

Christmas Eve Services

Merry Christmas! KirkWood is planning two Christmas Eve services like we have in the past. As we have previously celebrated, there will be a 5:00 p.m. “family style” service and an 11:00 p.m. “reflective” service. As expected, both services will be following the requirements at the time for capacity, spacing, and mask-wearing to minimize the risk of spreading Covid. At the time of writing this, that allows for in-person worship, but that may change. To help with our planning for both services, we are asking that you go to Sign-Up Genius to indicate which service(s) you and your household are hoping to attend in-person: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44AEAE28ABF94-christmas> .

We do not expect this to cement your holiday plans, as we know, particularly in 2020, nothing is certain. It is our hope that many of you will be able to join us in person for Christmas Eve, yet we respect changes in plans and levels of comfort.

Church Services

Worship at KirkWood continues to strive to make the best of our current environment. While congregation and choral singing presents an unacceptable level of risk, we are being creative in our approach to worship. By continuing to participate in the service (in-person or through YouTube), you will see some of the exciting things we have coming up throughout Advent and Christmastime.

We also continue to monitor the guidance from the CDC and will continue to comply with the State of Virginia’s Executive Orders. We have been fortunate that, unlike other states, we are able to still worship in person. Thankfully, we are in a position to adapt and make necessary changes as required. KirkWood can rest in the knowledge that, we will continue to provide ways for you to worship God. We look forward to when we can worship in person as one, as Paul put it in second Timothy, “longing to see you ... so that I may be filled with joy.”



KIRKWOOD DANCE PROJECT

Worship

Praise dancing is a liturgical or spiritual dance that incorporates music and movement as a form of worship rather than as an expression of art or as entertainment. Praise dancers use their bodies to express the word and spirit of God.

Although the definition remains straightforward, at its core the depth and meaning of liturgical dance holds great purpose, and biblical origins. One of the most common mentions of dance in the bible references King David in 2 Samuel 6:14, *"And David danced with all his might before the Lord"*.

But what is the purpose behind King David's dance? Biblical scholars have denoted that the significance of this passage, indicates that David's dance was a form of his worship and love for God. His dance was a communication of praise and a demonstration of Honor.



On Sunday, November 22nd, the KirkWood Dance Project was finally realized as Emily Fisher presented a dance interpretation of the song "Come as You Are". Emily is majoring in dance and psychology and hopes to become a dance therapist. We are happy to put Emily's talent to good use at KirkWood. She will present another dance on Christmas Eve.



VIRTUAL ADVENT STUDY & DISCUSSION

Christian Education

INCARNATION: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas by Adam Hamilton

Everyone is welcome to participate in an online video lesson and discussion study of who this Jesus is that is so anticipated at Christmas on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. Contact the church office or Christine Pregler at preglerweims@gmail.com for the Zoom meeting link.

Nov. 29th **Week 1 - Presidents and Kings**
What kind of King is this, championing self-denial and deeds of caring?

Dec. 6th **Week 2 - The Savior and our need for Saving**
Saved from Sin and death, what's that about?

Dec. 13th **Week 3 - Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic**
God with us, to incarnate God's love in us – here, now

Dec. 20th **Week 4 - The Light of the World**
Enabling perspective, casting out fear

KIRKWOOD YOUTH GROUP (KYG)

Christian Education

KirkWood's middle and high school group is still growing! We have a great number of new young adult volunteers to the program, in addition to new members continuing to arrive in our group. We are now averaging an attendance of around 17 people and attempting to find creative ways to entertain them. Ashley Wenner welcomes ideas and brainstorming help!

Recently, the youth has had plenty of opportunities to put their hands to work in service of our church and community. They prepared two Meals for Vets drop offs, carved pumpkins





from the patch for our shut-ins (idea proposed and pumpkins shuttled by Barb and Mike Drejza,) and stuffed 13 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child! They've also been assisting Wendy on Missions with assembling items for the hygiene kits that are dropped off at PORT locations.

We want to give a hearty thank you to the P&F Committee for their work on our youth rooms, Regina Harris for donating some amazing comfy couches for much needed seating, and to the parents and kids who continue to bring snacks, donate items and furniture, and bring support to our youth leaders. Anyone who would like to donate prepackaged snacks or drink items is welcome to drop things off at the church labeled for KYG! We are so grateful for the support of our congregation.





KIRKWOOD SILVER

Congregational Care

Hey, there, KirkWood Silver friends. As I write this message, we are approaching Thanksgiving Day, and I am feeling especially grateful for each one of you! I am grateful, also, that so many of you came for two great KWS fellowship events this Fall, the Honey Baked Boxed Lunch in mid-October and Pizza in the Parking Lot in November. There was quite a good turnout for each of those happy times!

KirkWood Silver will not be able to gather again until conditions improve and until we can count on comfortable weather. In the mean time, let's commit to staying in touch through phone calls or notes or emails or even driveway visits! And, pray for one another.

As the Christmas season comes into focus, let's be extra attentive to one another. I found a December 2007 clipping from the newspaper of a column by a local pastor encouraging the readers to "keep the holiday season worship driven." One of the suggestions I especially like is to "send every gift and card with a prayer."

Let's all stay safe and well. May we find Comfort and Joy in celebrating Immanuel, God with us. Christmas reminds us that He keeps His promises!



NOVEMBER 2020 SESSION SUMMARY

Session

- Nancy Risen was approved to be Session Clerk for 2021.
- Governor Northam's Amended Order 67 for COVID – Groups of 250 lowered to 25 for both inside and outside; this does not apply to religious services or educational institutions. This does apply to religious groups and scouts. Also groups over 25 people cannot be split into two separate groups. Masks required for 5 year olds and up. Social distancing is required for all gatherings.
- The Christian Education & Property and Facilities Committees will work on a joint proposal for a moveable volleyball net and tetherball, as well as a plan going forward for the playground.
- Hallway bulletin boards will be hung in early December and new flooring will be done in early 2021.
- On January 23rd, we will hold a drive-by chili dinner from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Sign-ups will be required.
- Our “stewardship Sundays” will be 11/15 and 11/22, on which we'll also begin to collect pledge cards.
- The Outreach Committee is working on an Advent prayer path on the church grounds.
- Pastor Chris is beginning to work with the PLD (Planning and Leadership Development Committee) on some initial strategic planning questions.