

# KirkWood Kronicle

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

FEBRUARY 2024



KirkWood Family,

If you read my letter in the 2023 annual report, you might remember me saying that church growth brings challenges. Sure, a church being stuck, plateaued, or in decline brings some too, but there's a predictable, distinctive set that comes with growth as well.

What I'd like to do in this article is pass along a summary of the very best research on this topic. I'll be pulling from a synopsis written by a retired Canadian pastor turned podcaster and leadership guru - Carey Nieuwhof.

So, what are anticipatable growth pains in a church? Here are four:

- 1) As more people come, the church will find itself in a kind of tug of war – to quote the article, “In a growing organization, you will always have more demands than you’ll have time... If you’re not careful, more and more of your energy and attention will be pulled from the creativity, outreach, and interpersonal engagement with those who don’t attend the church that fueled your growth spurt. Merely managing a church isn’t a way to keep it growing.”
- 2) Without great systems that foster care for people, you won’t care for people – again, let me cite the piece directly, “Many churches and their leaders are afraid of systems and structure because they think it means the creation of bureaucracy. But bureaucracy stifles mission. Great systems fuel it. Like an office tower designed to house thousands of people, great systems and structure support the goals of the organization with lean but solid processes around finances, management, discipleship, relationship-building, etc. Without structure, freedom and creativity collapse into chaos and disorganization.”



**KirkWood Presbyterian Church**

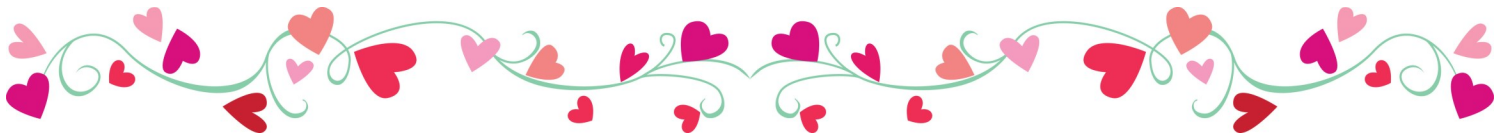
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**Worship:** Sundays, 9:30 AM, in person and broadcast live via KirkWood's home page and our YouTube channel. On-demand replays are available on YouTube and the church website.

**Sunday School:** 8:30 AM (adults) and 11:00 AM for all ages



A P.S. on this: the development of clear systems, structures, and communication might be even more vital for a congregation that is seeing the total number of those engaged rise beyond 150 or so. Or, to use the labels, is moving from being a “small church” to a “small medium-sized church.” And that’s KirkWood right now. We think that there are 200+ who are actively engaged with our congregation – that’s not a small church by definition. Which leads directly to the next item from Nieuwhof’s piece...

3) You won’t know everyone’s name. Many who attend a small church expect the church to be one big family – everyone knows everyone. The Oxford evolutionary psychologist Robin Dunbar was first to posit what is now a widely-held sociological maxim – a human can only maintain a stable connection with a maximum of 150 people (this is known, fittingly enough, as Dunbar’s Number). That single factoid lies behind the tension many growing small congregations feel. As Nieuwhof puts it, “The point of church is not for everyone to know everyone. The point is for everyone to be known. So, create a church where everyone who wants to be known...is. You will reach far more people if you do.”

A subset of this challenge is the need to integrate long timers at the church with newcomers. Very often, long timers have no remaining relational space in their lives: they have their specific group or class, they have their ministry or area of service, and there is no room to build relationships with a newcomer. Little else can cause growth to sputter out than long timers not being deliberate about connecting and building friendships with newcomers.

4) But, most importantly, there are certain attitude choices that are critical to keep a church growing...here are two:

Long timers can’t treat newcomers as second-class citizens, nor insist that their own perspectives and preferences carry more weight because they’ve been at the church longer. (If anything, a newcomer’s point of view may be more valuable because they can speak more accurately about the church’s appeal in the present tense.) Building trust, camaraderie, and a shared sense of purpose between long timers and newcomers is an indispensable part of leaning into, and not short-circuiting, growth.

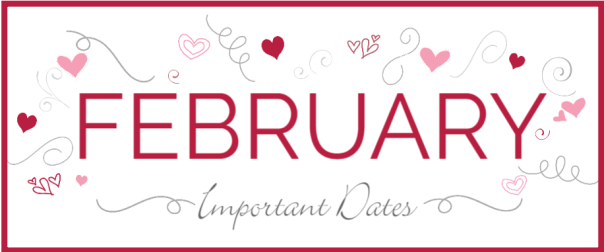
More people need to do more things. The 20% who have done 80% of the work must be willing to delegate to and empower others. In a growing church, you’re moving away →



from a few people doing a lot to more people doing less individually. Those who are used to being “in control” must be willing to have the church decentralized; those who have led in the past need to invest their time in creating and training new leaders to widen the leadership pool. And that 20% who so often carried the water in the past needs to say “no” on occasion so that new contributors are called into action and begin to take responsibility for the wellbeing of the congregation.

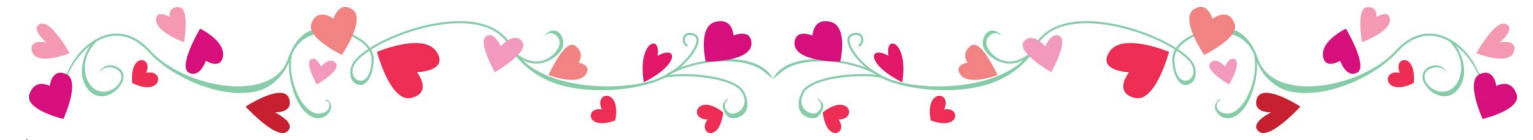
I pray that this helps make all of us mindful of what we’re currently facing, and how we can proceed together in such a way that we don’t undercut the growth we’ve experienced. With growth comes requisite intentionality and renewed resolve. But the good news is that the God who brought forth the growth will be the same God who helps us sustain it, provided we’re willing to build our church His way. (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3.5-7). Never forget – ours is the great privilege of being God’s coworkers in the spiritual construction of KirkWood Presbyterian Church, which is no less than one small part of His new creation project in the world (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3.9).

Warmly,  
Pastor Chris



- February 10 – Chili Cook-Off at 6:00 PM
- February 11 – Transfiguration of Our Lord
- February 14 – Ash Wednesday
- February 17 – Sleep in Heavenly Peace Bed Build 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
- February 19 – Presidents Day
- February 24 – Drive-By Food Collection 9:00 -11:00 AM
- February 29 – Leap Day

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# Eating is Caring at KirkWood

## Congregational Care

**Get Ready for Chili and Fun!** Our annual chili cook-off is almost upon us. It will be a Valentine's-themed event on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 PM. We'll present awards for best chili (Best Four-Legged, Best Two-Legged, Best No/Mo'-Legged, and Best Overall) based on the scores of our eminently qualified judges. For those of you for whom chili is not your strong suit, we'll need side dishes and desserts as well. You can sign up and, for chili entrants, obtain a copy of the cook-off rules in the Narthex. You may also sign up on-line at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4AAFA62FA13-47169571-kirkwood>.

**KirkWood Dining Partners:** Dining Partners will gather on Saturday, February 17, at 6 PM, for some South of the Border fare at Los Compadres Taqueria Y Marisqueria (i.e. Mexican restaurant) located at 3360 Commander Shepard Blvd in Hampton. Join us for fellowship and fine food. BRAVO! POC is Cindy Williamson. [757-344-5577]

**Other Upcoming Events:** On Easter Sunday, Arba and Cindy Williamson will be hosting their annual pancake and bacon breakfast (Yum!) at KirkWood after the Sunrise service. How can you say "No" to pancakes and bacon? In April on a date to be announced, we'll be having another "Biscuit Sunday" after the worship service. Put on your baking hat and get your recipes ready!

**Meals Support:** If due to illness, hospitalization, or other circumstances you require assistance in providing meals for yourself or family, CC is here to help. We can arrange for volunteers to provide up to three meals for your home during these times. Under exceptional conditions, we will work with you or your family to provide additional support. POC is Wendy Linehan. [757-509-8233]

Unless otherwise noted, the point of contact for these items/events is Lew Goodman. [757-375-7520]



# Get Out With Fellow KirkWoodians

## Congregational Care

**Walking Group:** The KirkWood walking group will be returning to the Matteson Trail in Hampton on Saturday February 10th at 10:00 AM. It is a beautiful, flat, 3-mile, paved trail through the woods protected from the wind as it winds around the Hamptons Golf course. As always, there will also be options for a 1 or 2 mile walk as well.

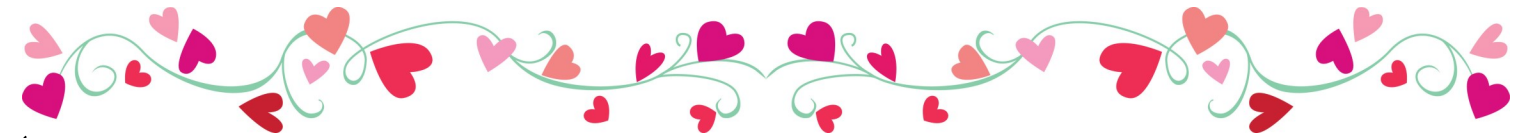
Come join the fun, the company, and the great outdoors. The Matteson trail is located at the corner of Neil Armstrong Parkway and Butler Farm Road. We'll meet in the parking lot of the Police Training Center. If you have any questions, contact Bruce Knight 757-303-4252 or Janet Knight 757-303-4253.

**KirkWood Silver:** KirkWood Silver plans to visit the Torggler Fine Arts Center at Christopher Newport University on Thursday, February 15th. The time will be announced in the near future. One exhibit we will see is the **Barr Collection of Pointers**, tools used for reading Hebrew scrolls. They are made with a variety of materials and impressive designs. A second exhibit features **Benjamin Wigfall**, who was an artist and art advocate in the 1950's through the 1970's. He was especially concerned for those who did not have the opportunity to be exposed to art or to be involved in making art. He created centers for that purpose. Also, we have been assured that the beautiful and fascinating lights in the Torggler Lobby WILL be in full action! Those who went with KW last February to the Torggler will remember being disappointed that the lights were being serviced that day. Lunch will be at the Warwick Restaurant.

Please watch for more details in the bulletin about our February trip to CNU. Sign up will begin January 29th.

The sculpture of Anne Hyatt Huntington, who designed and sculpted the lions on the Lion's Bridge near the Mariner's Museum and other pieces, will not be on display at The Torggler until April. Regretfully, through a misunderstanding, we announced at the February Luncheon we would see that in February. Hopefully, we can arrange for those interested to see that exhibit at another time since it will be at the Torggler for an extended period of time.





# Walking the Path of Generosity

## Stewardship

Giving is a spiritual discipline like prayer, Bible study, and worship.

When we started to learn about Christ as children, did we begin by praying for many hours, reading five chapters of the Gospels, and worshipping for an hour?? No, we began our spiritual journey learning short Bible stories and verses.

We most likely began giving as children by giving a portion of our allowance. And we did so in a comfortable environment. Mom and Dad paid for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and everything else.

The point is that we develop faithfulness by starting small, then growing and finishing strong over time. Progress in our spiritual journey is very often in parallel with our movement along the giving path.

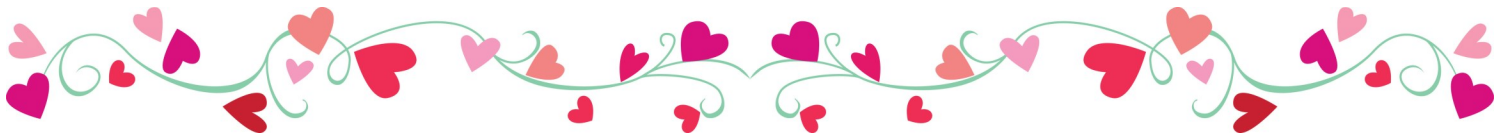
### **Steps along the Giving Path**

**First Time Giver** – Begin to give, any amount and any frequency. As we begin the Giving Path journey, we begin to give to God out of a love and understanding of who God is in our life.

**Intentional Giver** – Plan to give a percentage of your income for the year. With growth in our discipleship, we begin to plan for the year what percentage of our income we want to give out of the blessings we have received.

**Growing Giver** – Increase your percentage of income as you move toward becoming a “tither”. As we grow in our learning and giving of our time and talents, we may be moved to increase the percentage.

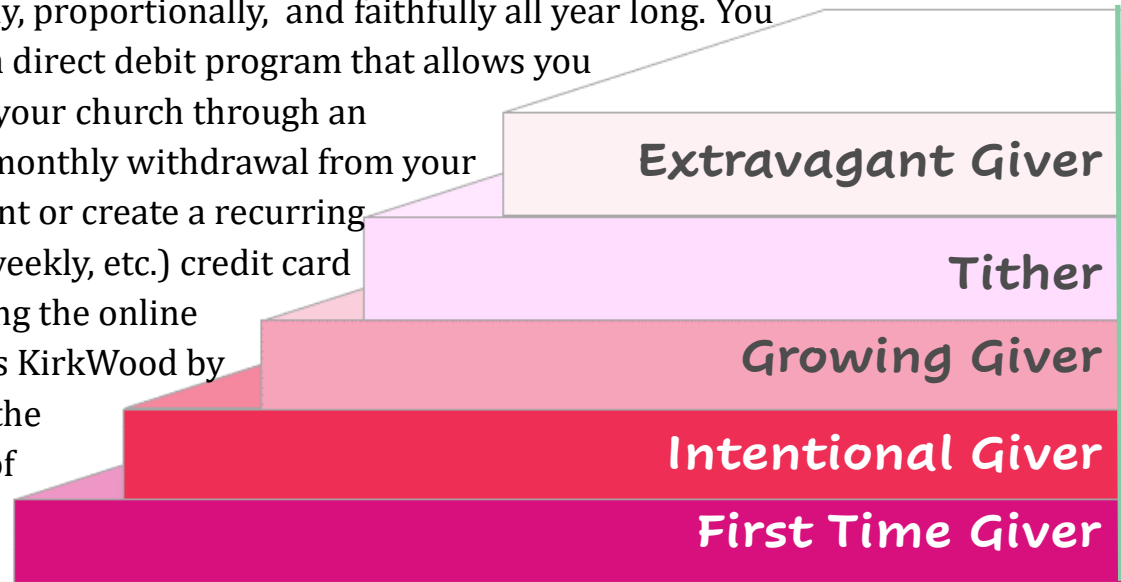
**Tither** - Begin to give the Biblical tithe (10% of your gross income). The word “tithe” simply means 10 percent. Tithing is the principle of putting God first in our lives and giving the first 10 percent of our income.

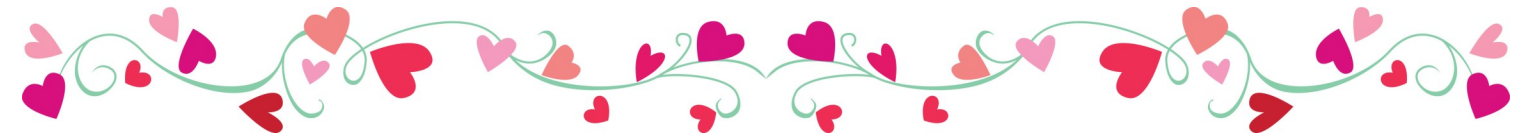


**Extravagant Giver** – Giving beyond the tithes. We soon discover a new joy, and our lives are transformed because of our love for God and our relationship with Jesus Christ. This giving becomes an offering out of a deeper gratitude and generosity.

How we use our resources is primarily a spiritual issue, not a financial one. God does not need our money; rather, we need to give it as an act of gratitude and trust. Prayerfully consider how you will support KirkWood and its ministries in the new year.

KirkWood's **online giving portal** is one way to enable people to give their offering intentionally, proportionally, and faithfully all year long. You can set up a direct debit program that allows you to support your church through an automatic monthly withdrawal from your bank account or create a recurring (monthly, weekly, etc.) credit card charge. Using the online portal helps KirkWood by increasing the regularity of offerings, reducing the seasonal low giving periods, and is convenient for those worshipping virtually.





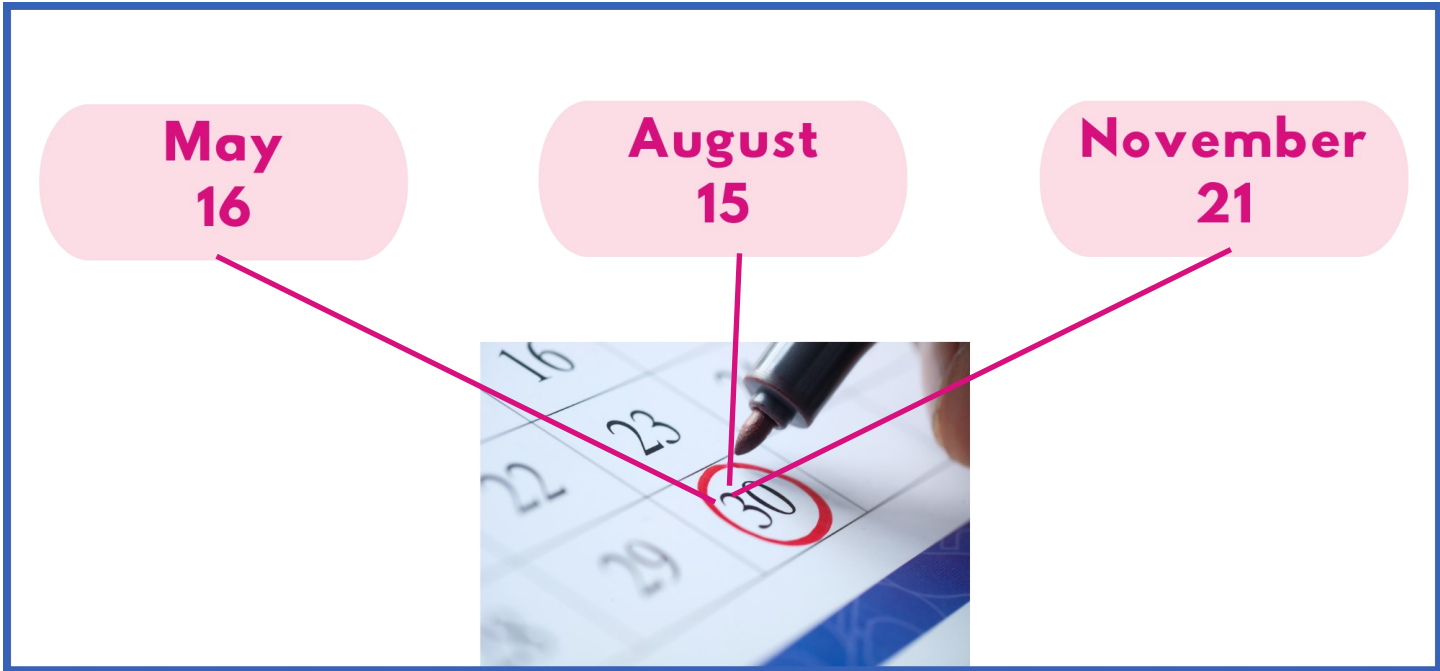
# Blood Drives Schedule for 2024

## Mission

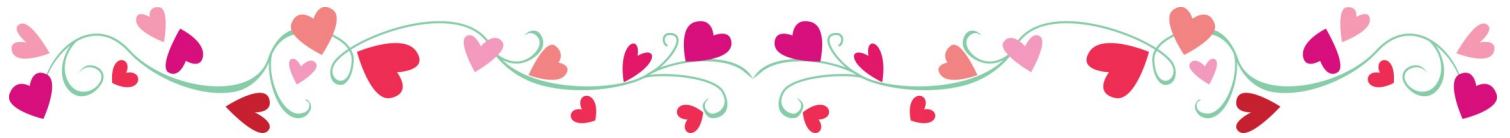
Blood Drive: Our first Red Cross Blood drive of 2024 will be held on Thursday, February 15 from 2:00-7:00 PM in the fellowship hall. Retired military are now eligible to give after the restriction was lifted for those stationed in Europe during the 1980's. We will again be serving a small meal to all presenting donors. The Red Cross will send all registered donors a link on the morning of the drive to complete the RapidPass. This allows you to complete most of the prescreening questions prior to the appointment.

Our 2024 dates are: (all Thursdays from 2:00-7:00 PM in the fellowship hall), May 16th, August 15th, and November 21st. The sign up for the February and May drives are open and you can go online to schedule your appointments or contact Cathy Hudgins ([hudgepudge@aol.com](mailto:hudgepudge@aol.com)) to make your appointment for you.

If you would like to inquire about helping at the drives or with donating food during the drives, please contact Cathy.







# Plenty of Opportunities to Serve!

## Mission

Happy New Year from your Mission Committee! We want to thank our congregation for supporting the Christmas Offering. Because of your generous gifts and Mission’s matching, we were able to support York-Poquoson Department of Social Services (\$3,200) and the Pastor’s Blessing fund (\$3,200) lovingly into 2024. We have many opportunities for you to get involved and share God’s love with our neighbors.

The KirkWood Food Kupboard has seen a steady stream of visitors. Thank you for your support in this mission for our community. If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer, visit our QR code for the SignUp Genius to pick a few dates to monitor and stock the pantry from supplies in our Narthex donation bin.



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040849A4AB2A1-little#/>

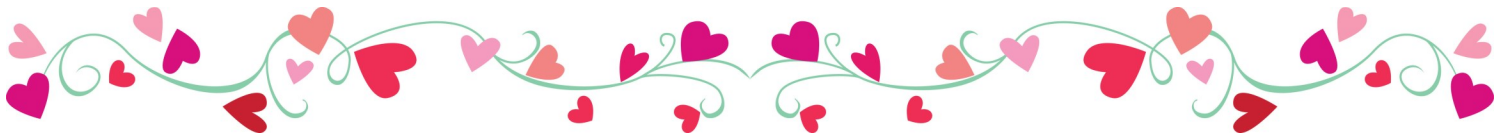
### Popular Kupboard Items

- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Canned tomatoes    | Canned beans |
| Spaghetti sauce    | Smoked ham   |
| Canned meats       | Juices       |
| Cold & hot cereals | Pasta        |
| Macaroni & cheese  |              |

Our drive-by quarterly food donation drive is scheduled for **February 24th** from 9:00-11:00 AM in the circle in front of the church. These donations support our Kupboard, St. Luke’s, and the Peninsula Food Bank.

KirkWood partners with First Hampton Presbyterian to provide lunches to the homeless in the Hampton area. We assemble and provide lunches on months with a 5th Thursday (once a quarter). **February 29** is the next 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday. First Hampton has also asked for additional help for the 2nd Thursday lunch program AND two volunteers every 2nd Thursday of the month. First Hampton will provide all the supplies for the lunches. Our task would be to arrive at 10:00 AM., assist with assembly of the lunches, and hand them out to visitors from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM. You can sign up by scanning the QR code or look for Arba Williamson [757-344-5588] for more information. [rebrand.ly/2ndHamptonlunch](https://rebrand.ly/2ndHamptonlunch)





Mark your calendars for **February 17** to come and support *Sleep in Heavenly Peace*. We will help build 20 (or more) twin-sized beds, in one day, for children in need who do not have a bed to call their own. Please scan the QR code below and consider volunteering a few hours for this worthy cause.



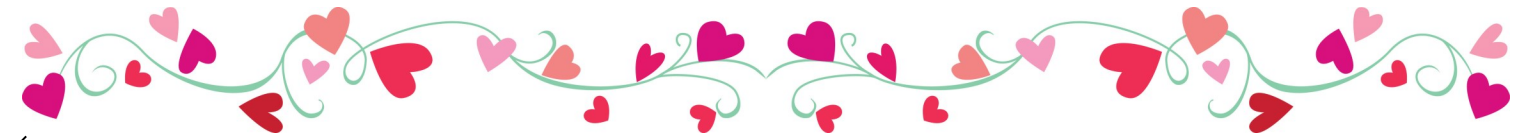
<https://x.gldn.io/e/ODNw8h7GmFb>

We also collect food donations for St. Luke's Food Pantry the first Sunday of the month. The collection bin is next to the KirkWood Food Kupboard bin in the Narthex. This valuable organization provided us the "Wish List" (see below). Volunteers from St. Luke's pantry program supports residents of York County and Poquoson. No referral is required, but recipients must show proof of residency with eligible clients receiving assistance eight times per year. Clients are provided with three large bags of groceries plus a Food Lion gift card (\$10) to help buy any perishables.

#### **St. Luke's 2024 "Wishlist"**

Canned stews  
Canned meats  
Canned pasta  
Dry pasta  
Spaghetti sauces  
All varieties of soups/ creamed soups  
Dry rice  
Ramen  
Pork and beans  
Cereals  
Toilet paper

**Your Mission committee meets the first Tuesday of every month from 6:30-7:30 PM in Classroom 4. Come join us!**



# 2023: Stellar Year for Reaching Out

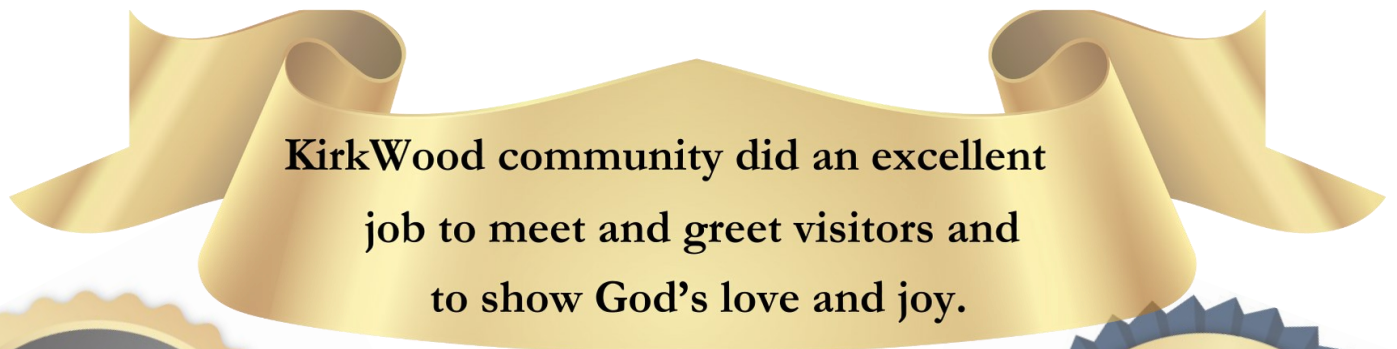
## Outreach



Our visitor goal for 2024 is 60 so the Outreach committee will be planning activities and events to promote KirkWood as a wonderful Christian community to our neighbors. While advertising and social media posts are great, the most effective way to invite individuals and families is



by personal invitation. Our challenge to you in 2024 is for every KirkWood family to invite a friend or neighbor to Sunday service, a dinner, or a special event (Easter, picnic, or Pumpkin Palooza). Stay tuned for a sermon series on this subject. Prayerfully consider that God will give each you the courage to invite someone in 2024!





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