

# KirkWood Kronicle

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

February 2022

## A Message from our Pastor Chris Shearer



KirkWood family,

This newsletter article is meant to be a companion piece to what I've written in the 2021 Annual Report. One without the other is incomplete.

In the Annual Report, I highlighted a singularly important word for any organization, and thus for us—"culture."

I'd like to add to what I wrote there by giving you a brief overview of the most recent, comprehensive published study about healthy group/organizational culture: "The Culture Code" by Dan Coyle (2018). I especially think it's wise to do this because Coyle touches on issues that I did not in the Annual Report; that is, he covers new, vital ground for a healthy culture.

To put it simply, he identifies and then expands upon three indispensable factors for a strong, sustainable culture: 1) build safety, 2) share vulnerability, and 3) establish purpose. (To clarify, "build safety" refers to relational, psychological safety.)

And these are interdependent and in order: for example, #3 cannot happen without #1 and #2 first being in place.

Let me use the rest of my time summarizing Coyle's findings about the first two cultural traits, followed by just a few sentences on the third (which really deserves an article of its own)...



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

**Sunday School:** Sundays 8:30 a.m. (adult) and 11 a.m. (all ages). Nursery care is available. Please visit our website for information on additional resources for individual, family, and group nurturing.



## **Build Safety**

When those in an organization feel safe interpersonally and emotionally, they perform better... and thus the whole performs better too.

Belonging cues are crucial to building relational safety, and it involves very specific behaviors like positive body language, vocal intonation, eye contact, positive energy, taking turns when talking, and active listening.

Fundamentally, this is about how people are treated by leaders, and how people treat each other. The goal is for every single person to feel unique and valued.

Here are some actionable steps to build more safety:

- ◆ Overcommunicate that you're listening: You can do this through affirmation of what's being said, and not interrupting the person speaking.
- ◆ Spotlight your fallibility early: It's natural to want to hide your weaknesses, but by spotlighting your fallibility, you invite input. You can do this by using phrases such as "what am I missing?" or "what do you think?"
- ◆ Embrace the messenger: It can be tough to receive negative or differing feedback at times. To build safety, you must thank the messenger for their message, even if you dislike or disagree with it. This keeps the door open for good communication in the future and makes the giver feel safe talking to you.
- ◆ Make sure everyone has a voice: To do this, you must value the whole group's contribution. This gives everyone a space where they can contribute and feel as if they belong.

**Cultural Traits**

*Build Safety*

*Share Vulnerability*

*Establish Purpose*

## **Share Vulnerability**

Once you build trust, you can then turn that into vulnerability or trusting cooperation.

So what's vulnerability about? Within a group, large or small, it's being okay with having weaknesses and asking for help. And the response of the people within the group to any one





person's vulnerability is just as important. When someone signals vulnerability, it's necessary that the other people also are willing to show their own vulnerability or fallibility.

This dynamic increases trust and closeness within the group.

Here are some actionable steps to increase and preserve vulnerability:

- ◆ The group's leaders must be vulnerable first, setting the example for others to follow.
- ◆ Overcommunicate the expectations about relational safety and vulnerability within the group.
- ◆ Prioritize face-to-face communication for anything that has the chance to be perceived or taken as negative by the receiver.
- ◆ Disagreements are often prime moments to express vulnerability, and therefore diffuse any potential conflict.
- ◆ Embrace the discomfort of vulnerability. Vulnerability can be quite awkward and scary. By verbalizing that discomfort, you understand that showing vulnerability is not about the pain it causes but about building a better group.

### **Establish Purpose**

What is the purpose of the group, and why does it exist? Only with safety and vulnerability in place can this finally be addressed by an organization.

Purpose comes down to why, as in, "Why is this group here?" and, "Why are we doing what we're doing?"

But purpose is really comprised of two smaller queries: Where are we now, and where do we want to go?

These two smaller questions create what's called "mental contrasting." That's when you think about a goal that is reachable, and then think about the obstacles that stand in its way.

Warmly, Pastor Chris



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### Special Dates and Upcoming Events

- African American History Month
- February 14 — Valentine's Day
- February 19 — Dining-Out Group
- February 21 — Presidents Day
- February 27 — Transfiguration of Our Lord

## Congregational Care Roundup

### Congregational Care

**Annual Chili Cook-off:** Our annual Chili Cook-off scheduled for Sunday, January 23, was postponed because of the COVID resurgence. We're hoping to reschedule during the March/April time frame and look forward to judging and consuming your four-legged (beef, pork, etc.), two-legged (poultry), and no-legged (seafood, vegetarian) entries. Contest rules and sign-up information will be provided once we have a new date.

**Valentine's Day Breakfast:** Our Valentine's Day potluck breakfast, scheduled for Sunday, February 13, has been postponed, again because of COVID. We hope to reschedule later in February. Stay tuned.

**KirkWood Silver:** KirkWood Silver will not meet in February. (More information on pg. 9.)

**KirkWood Dining-Out Group:** Please join the Dining-Out Group on February 19, restaurant to be announced.

**Meals Support:** As always, if you or a loved one needs temporary help with meals for any reason, please let the church office know. The CC Committee is here to assist you.

Lew Goodman is the point of contact for these items/events.



# We Are All Blessed

## Stewardship

We are all fortunate to live in this beautiful world God has created. We have received many gifts and blessings from God, and we thank Him for them daily, weekly, monthly, etc. That is to say, we should always be mindful and thankful for all that has been bestowed upon us.

Annual giving to KirkWood, whether pledged or not, provides support for ongoing programs such as Christian education, worship, building maintenance, and a host of mission efforts. In previous articles we have recapped the various options to show your commitment to KirkWood’s ongoing mission and outreach efforts, and these are recapped toward the end of the article.



In this article we wanted to highlight giving through charitable bequests, permanent endowment funds, and other estate plans that enable you to share God’s material gifts with the church and help fund its mission.

A bequest is a financial term describing the act of giving assets—such as stocks, bonds, and cash—to an organization through the provisions of a will or an estate plan. A bequest can be made directly to KirkWood as an outright gift. Another option is to make a bequest to establish an endowment fund, which will provide income in perpetuity to KirkWood and create a lasting legacy of your faith.

With regard to bequests and wills, it is never too early to write a will; it can only be too late. Writing your will is the most important step you can take in planning for the distribution of your assets. Without it, the probate court will make decisions about the distribution of your assets, and no assets will be given to any charitable organization, no matter how important that organization was to you during your lifetime. A properly prepared will is a very effective means to accomplish many goals, including charitable intentions.





Once you have considered how you would like your assets distributed, and to whom, you are ready to formalize your will. An attorney should do this, so that proper language and terms are used. Employing an attorney will ensure that your intentions are clear and concise. This prevents the possibility of misunderstandings and delays in probating your will and ensures your will complies with the specific requirements of your state.

Other options to support KirkWood include:

- 1) The KirkWood website ([www.kirkwoodpcusa.org](http://www.kirkwoodpcusa.org)) now has a button to securely donate online using your credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer (EFT). Check it out—you can specify if you want to designate your gift (ex., flowers, HOPE offering, general fund, etc.).
- 2) You can donate through a new secure KirkWood app on your smartphone. (See next page for information on how to download and use the app.)
- 3) You can mail checks to the church office at 1209 Hampton Highway, Yorktown, VA 23693.
- 4) You can give shares of stock to KirkWood. This is especially beneficial if the shares have appreciated in value because the donor doesn't pay capital gains tax on the appreciated value and KirkWood benefits from the appreciated value. The church office can provide instructions on how to transfer the shares to KirkWood's brokerage account.
- 5) You can contribute directly to KirkWood from your traditional or inherited IRA. A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) allows individuals who are at least age 70½ to direct all or part of an IRA distribution directly to KirkWood.

You can request a distribution, up to \$100,000, from your IRA made payable to KirkWood without any additional tax consequences. Keep in mind that when you contribute directly from your IRA to KirkWood, you cannot take a charitable deduction for the QCD, but for many it could provide a better tax benefit.



Consider the many ways to support KirkWood financially outlined here to decide on the best fit for your circumstances and individual goals. You may be surprised that even a small asset can be turned into a gift which will show your enduring faith in perpetuity.



# Vanco Mobile App is here!

## Stewardship

In the last Kronicle, we told you about KirkWood’s new online giving capability through our website. Now we have another exciting capability... KirkWood’s new *Vanco Mobile* app for your smartphone.

Currently, you can use the app to contribute to KirkWood right from your phone. However, in the future, we plan to enable other app features that will facilitate church communications and allow KirkWoodians to keep in touch, join groups, sign up for events, and chat with other KirkWoodians and church staff, all within the app.

Here is how to get started using *Vanco Mobile* to contribute:

- 1) Go to the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
- 2) Search for “Vanco Mobile App.” (It’s **FREE!**)
- 3) Download and install it. (Fig. 1 is the app’s logo.)
- 4) Open the app and search for “KirkWood Presbyterian Church.”
- 5) (There will be at least five Kirkwood Presbyterian Churches from which to choose.) Select “KirkWood Presbyterian Church of Yorktown.”
- 6) If you’ve already created an account through KirkWood’s website, just log in and select “Give.”
- 7) If you haven’t already created an account through the website, select “Sign Up” to create one.



Fig. 1

Contributions made through the mobile app will become part of your complete online-giving history, which you can check any time by going to <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z213/home>, logging in, and selecting “Profile.”

If you’re already sending your contributions automatically through your bank or credit union and your institution does not charge you a fee for that service, please continue to use it.





However, if you are not sending your contributions automatically, please consider using our new online or smartphone app capabilities for your future contributions. Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and provides donation consistency for the church. And of course, you may always write a check and deliver it to the church office.

If you have any questions about KirkWood’s electronic giving capabilities, please contact Mike Fore, [mike.fore4@gmail.com](mailto:mike.fore4@gmail.com) or (757) 867-6805.

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## Reaching Out in a COVID World

### Outreach

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The Outreach Committee is excited about 2022. A key part of KirkWood’s vision is “to make Christ known to all.” The Outreach Committee plans to improve and find new ways to touch lives in our COVID world, but we need your help. Remember, stewardship is not just money but “time” and “talent” too. *Not an evangelist?* No problem. There are lots of ways to help KirkWood reach out to our neighbors. *Don’t have a lot of spare time in your 168-hour week?* How about helping with one or two of our efforts?

- ◆ We need folks to send a card or note to recent visitors.
- ◆ We need folks to send a card or gift to families touched by our mission team.
- ◆ We need help with our social media presence.
- ◆ We need folks willing to help Pastor Chris greet visitors before and after services (once a month or once a quarter works).
- ◆ We need everyone to invite their friends and neighbors to KirkWood.



The committee was reminded recently that 85% of visitors to a church come from a personal invitation or seeing something on social media. KirkWood is a wonderful place to experience God’s love! Let’s let others know what they are missing!

Contact Arba Williamson (757-344-5588) or Toni Fisher (719-237-1156) to volunteer. To share ideas, attend the next committee meeting on Tuesday, February 8 at 7 p.m.



# February Blood Drive, Mark Your Calendars!

## Outreach

The first 2022 Kirkwood Blood Drive is scheduled for **THURSDAY, February 17, 2022, from 2-7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. As of this date, the Red Cross is requiring masks for all donors, regardless of vaccination status. We will be discussing when we will be comfortable bringing the offering of a meal back. Please be on the lookout for updates on this.

Donors can schedule their appointments by going online to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org), sponsor code KirkwoodPC. All donors are encouraged to complete the RAPIDPASS on the day of the drive. RAPIDPASS lets you do the prescreen process from your laptop, desktop computer or cell phone, and can save you as much as 15-20 minutes when you get to the drive. The Red Cross will send a link to your email the day of the drive.



If you have questions or would like to inquire as to how you can help at upcoming drives, please contact Cathy Hudgins, 757-869-2645 or [hudgepudge@aol.com](mailto:hudgepudge@aol.com). **I am looking for a couple of volunteers to help with registration and in the canteen during the drive.** If you need assistance making your appointment, contact Cathy.

There is an urgent need for all types of blood now and always. Please prayerfully consider coming out and donating this lifesaving need. Additional 2022 dates (all Thursdays) are: May 19, August 18, and November 17. These dates are tentative and will be confirmed after Session reviews and approves the 2022 calendar.

# KirkWood Silver

## Congregational Care

Because of COVID's omicron variant, KirkWood Silver will NOT meet in February. The planning team will meet early in February to decide when our next event will be. Watch for announcements in the bulletin and in the March Kronicle.





Weeping may tarry in the night,  
but joy comes in the morning.

Psalm 30:5b



In the meantime, let's please keep in touch with one another through phone calls, notes, and/or emails to help us get through this continuing challenging time! Prayers for us all will be appreciated!

## Practicing Joy & Showing Love

Christian Education



The Sunday morning classes continue exploring different practices of faithful living using the Follow Me curriculum for all ages. The four Sundays in February will look at the delightful "Practice of Joy."

- \* *See Joy in God's Creation*
- \* *Rejoice in God's Mercy*
- \* *Share Others' Joy*
- \* *Practice Joy in All Times*

Classes are open to all ages following corporate worship, plus an adults-only class at 8:30 a.m. Contact the office for a *Zoom* link connection to join the later adult class remotely, if that serves your needs.

Come practice joy with us in God's family.

**To the children and the grownups in charge...  
GOD LOVES YOU!**

With the Christmas decorations put away (or not, I am not judging), you might be looking for a way to show Jesus' love in a more visual way.

Especially if in-person church is not an option for your family every week, think of an intentional tradition that can open conversations and create reminders that you and your little one are loved.





Some ideas could include:

1. Type in “Valentine Church craft” into your Pinterest search for ideas on string heart paper plates or *I Spy* Valentines. Tape the finished crafts to a window or hang on the refrigerator.
2. Be an acolyte and light candles before the worship service. Even when worship is finished and the candles are extinguished, leave them out to be a reminder all week long.
3. Make a “Flat Jesus.” Carry him in your bookbag or put him on your nightstand. Give him a place at the table during dinner. Or just take a picture to send to Jeannine. It is easier than the *Elf on the Shelf* and gets into much less mischief! (Flat Jesus: <https://www.risingaboveministries.org/store-page/flatjesus>)
4. For older “children,” try to use a new word. Put your Bible somewhere central. In the morning open to a page and let your finger rest on a random word. Try to use that word throughout the day.

## KirkWood GROWERS are Brainstorming

Stewardship

### *KirkWood GROWERS*

*God’s Resource Organizers Working for Environmentally Responsible Stewardship*

We’ve been brainstorming ideas about things KirkWood could do to model good stewardship of our environmental resources. (See ideas below and next page.)

**Have something to add to the list? See anything that really strikes your interest? Contact Charlie Reece.**

- ◆ Solar panels on the roof. Costs are coming down. Visible. Would need to coordinate with roof replacement.
- ◆ Beehives. Good for pollinators, good for modeling earth care, visible, could be a teaching vehicle.
- ◆ Garden shares. Facilitate linkage to providers. Promotes eating local and local growers.
- ◆ Bat boxes on building eaves (coordinate with Scouts?). Visible, teaching point, consume mosquitos, promotes reduction of need/use of chemical insect repellent.
- ◆ Recycling of KirkWood’s program materials. Must be made convenient and very visible to make good waste stream separation.





- ◆ Vegetable garden. Raised beds integrated with Pumpkin Patch layout. Visible, teaching point, food for shares and donation.
- ◆ Establish durable small picnic area near Wee KirkWood, useful for children’s programming and random family use.
- ◆ New walking path (with deliberate teaching purpose) in the south wedge. Will become family accessible with new sidewalk installed by the county.
- ◆ Rain garden at various flow collection points. Different group “ownerships”? Teaching points with benefits regarding stormwater runoff issues.
- ◆ Compostable doggie-do bag supplies to encourage dog walkers to use the new county-provided sidewalk and “cleanly” access our walks and facilities.
- ◆ Deliberate low-maintenance butterfly bush and shade plantings to attract and support favorable flying insects. Many opportunities along the prayer path and around Wee KirkWood. Plant high-growing undergrowth plants along south border.
- ◆ Enlist Scouts and others to undertake an annual(?) site survey for animals (turtles, birds, insect varieties, fox, etc.). Get expert guidance on methodology.
- ◆ Bird houses and bird feeders. Purple martin(?) for mosquitos. Requires careful choice and maintenance.
- ◆ Local bird log and educational encouragement by one or two serious “bird watchers.”
- ◆ Collaborate with others as much as possible.
- ◆ Learn more about becoming a certified “[Earth Care Congregation.](#)”
- ◆ Host a “Stewardship of the Earth” conference with local congregations.
- ◆ Encourage careful energy consumption in KirkWood’s activities. Motivate first as a responsible sustainability choice rather than economic.
- ◆ Encourage and enable energy-smart home features in the congregation. Education and skilled services.
- ◆ Educate regarding food source sustainability implications.

