

KirkWood Kronicle

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

May 2021

A Message from our Pastor Chris Shearer



Between Indio, California, located on the southeastern end of the Coachella Valley, a little removed from its more famous neighbor Palm Springs, and Blythe, California, on the Arizona border is a 100-mile stretch of Interstate 10 full of absolutely nothing. Just desert, with a scant few offramps to long-abandoned rest stops, hotels, and upstart towns, like Desert Center, which, yes, is the halfway point between you and civilization in either direction. My dad used to tell us when traveling that way, “Make sure you have enough gas to make it...otherwise, it’s a long, hot walk.”

Cars don’t have unlimited, self-perpetuating fuel supplies. Not yet anyway. Well, neither do human beings. In fact, modern neurology tells us that each of us has a finite cognitive and emotional fuel tank. Sure, the size of that fuel tank might vary from person to person, the norm being between four to six hours a day, but rest assured that no one has an unending power supply, despite how we might try to fool one another. As Christian author and pastor Max Lucado reflects, “Are you strong? Reserve passing judgment on the tired, because you too will be tired soon enough.”

So let’s talk a bit about how to maximize the limited amount of psychological energy that each of us brings to the table, and to our life and ministry here at KirkWood:



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Worship: Sundays, 9:30 and 11 a.m. Our 9:30 service is available live and on demand via YouTube, accessible through KirkWood’s home page and our YouTube channel.

Sunday School: KirkWood offers fresh resources for individual, family, and group nurturing. Please see details on pages 7 and 8.

1) First, just recognize that some conversations, decisions, or changes require more of that energy reserve than others, as Emma Seppälä writes in The Harvard Business Review (Feb. 2016). If you’re embroiled in a thorny interpersonal conflict or





working through a multiplicity of possible solutions to an important, even positive, question, you're going to have less fuel available elsewhere in your life.

This yields the wisdom that we should space out intense, involved deliberations and initiatives, interspersing them with seasons of rest and even rote routine so that we can recover. To use the automobile metaphor again, you can't run your Honda flat out, pedal to the metal and redlining your RPMs for too long without serious consequences. When you hit the place where you're running on vapor and your brain is starting to sputter, you might feel like sociologist Daniel Bell, who described himself as being "too weary to listen, and too angry to hear." So, we should seek a life rhythm that's like a cognitive two-step, intense engagement, followed by recuperation, then repeat. Of course, this is ever so relevant to the last year of our lives: navigating COVID has been serious business, nerve-wracking, unknown, and new, so it's only natural that we all feel a little more worn out than we even imagined that we would, and also why we've been a little crankier with each other than we'd hoped.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

2) Second, and this too is pretty self-evident, each of us needs to decide where we will spend that finite amount of energy. Truth be told, there's often a big difference between where we say we want to expend it and where we actually do.

Along those lines, there's a cliché in the church leadership world that goes, "Your church is going to care a lot about something; make sure it's the right thing." The point being, each person at KirkWood gets to decide into what they'll pour their emotional vigor. We'd be wise to make sure it's not into incidentals, minutiae, or the mere details of personal preference. To be frank, those aren't worthy of the limited mental fortitude we have to give every day. If we only have a fixed amount of capacity to invest, then let's make sure it's on the big stuff, the things that strike at the very heart of Jesus' message, and Christian formation, mission, and community. This is reminiscent of a well-known maxim from Stephen Covey: "Most of us spend too much time on what's urgent, and too little time on what's important."

3) Last, while it's true that intense engagements of all varieties are potentially draining, negative interactions and emotions are significantly more taxing on us than positive ones. So practically, for example, complaining, or hearing someone complain, consumes more energy than encouraging, or listening to encouragement. In like kind, criticizing saps you more than





celebrating, sulking wipes you out more than thanking, and getting mad burns more mental gas than staying patient and peaceable (which, admittedly, can be hard work at times too).

This is why Mark Manson labels some people “emotional vampires”: not only do they suck your own fuel tank dry, but, perhaps unbeknownst to them, they’re also emptying their own. This may well explain why some churches feel so lifeless, their spiritual gasoline was used up by a stubborn, dour, reactive, or suspicious culture. So at KirkWood let’s be vigilant to maintain an environment that gives and sustains life, and doesn’t take it.

Recognizing the high cost of negativity and the therapeutic effect of its opposite, the great Henri Nouwen advises us to ponder often:

“Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and the life to come.”

Warmly,
Chris

May Special Dates/Upcoming Events

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- May 1** – Food Collection Drive-By/Puzzle Exchange
- May 6** – National Day of Prayer
- May 9** – Mother’s Day
- May 13** – Ascension Day
- May 15** – Armed Forces Day
- May 16** – Senior Recognition Sunday (High School/College)
- May 20** – Red Cross Blood Drive; Kirkwood Silver BYOL Parking Lot Get-together
- May 22** – Military Appreciation Breakfast Drive-By
- May 23** – Pentecost
- May 30** – Trinity Sunday
- May 31** – Memorial Day



APRIL SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session

1. Congregational Care has postponed the church picnic due to COVID, moving it from June to sometime later in the year.
2. Congregational Care is working with Property/Facilities to create a "Little Library" for congregational use located somewhere near the mailbox.
3. Administration and Property/Facilities presented York Country's plan to put a sidewalk along KirkWood's side of Hampton Highway, and the minimal impact that would have on our property.
4. Pastor Chris has been asked to serve on the new Pastoral Coaches team within our Presbytery, and will be undertaking an intensive continuing ed. class on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between May 4 and June 24
5. KirkWood will begin posting the job listing for our next Youth Director shortly, beginning within our Presbytery.
6. The Worship Committee will be leading a discussion at the May 2021 Session meeting about when and how KirkWood will transition from the first phase of our reopening for in-person worship to the second, and what that might entail.

SPRING GRADUATES, TAKE NOTE

Administration

The office needs your help. If you are a senior in high school or college and will be graduating this spring, or you have a child who meets this criteria, **please contact the office by May 3**. We would also like to recognize the high school graduates during worship on May 16.

Please contact Albertina by email at office@kirkwoodpcusa.org or at 766-0343 with the name of the student, the school from which they will be graduating, the course of study (major/minor) if applicable/known, future plans and a picture (if possible). Thank you so much.



MEMBER CARE & FELLOWSHIP

Congregational Care

Military Appreciation Drive-By: In honor of our KirkWoodians who are serving or have served in the military, the Congregational Care Committee will be hosting an SOS (creamed beef and biscuit) Drive-By breakfast at KirkWood from **9-11 a.m. on Saturday, May 22**. Take home some good eats or stay awhile and visit (socially distanced, of course). Put it on your calendar and stay tuned for registration information.



Honoring Our Military Members

Meals Support: If you or a loved one needs temporary help with meals for any reason, please let the church office know. The Congregational Care committee is here to assist you.

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

KIRKWOOD SILVERS

Congregational Care



The April KirkWood Silver Bring your Own Lunch get-together in the parking lot was just plain delightful! Even though the day was chillier than hoped for, the sunshine and everyone's warm greetings made our fellowship time quite enjoyable!

Since the April KWS worked out so well, and since COVID protocols at Kirkwood are still restricting how many can gather in the Fellowship Hall, the KWS planners have decided the safest and simplest way for us to meet together in May is to have another BYOL Parking Lot event. The date will be **Thursday, May 20** at 11:30 a.m. Bring your favorite lunch, your chair, beverage, and mask. You do not need to sign up, but if you'd like to email to let us know your intentions, that will be appreciated!

The KWS planning team welcomes any ideas you may have for our monthly fellowship times, on site or off, once we can move about more freely. Thanks, all, for making KWS soooo good!

Wanda Birch



HELP FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Outreach

The Peninsula Food Bank and St. Luke's Food Pantry continue to report high demand for food assistance in our area. The Mission Committee will continue to host food collection events on the first Saturday of each month through the summer. The next event will be **Saturday, May 1, 9-11 a.m.** We will collect non-perishable food items, monetary donations, small toiletry items for LINK, and clean plastic grocery bags. Monetary and non-perishable food donations support both organizations. Please make checks payable to Peninsula Food Bank or York County Food Closet.



At the food drive, the Congregation Care Committee will host a Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange. Many of us have spent the COVID period doing jigsaw puzzles and once completed the box usually collects dust. Great way to support our KirkWood family. There will be a stop in the parking lot to swap your puzzle for a different one. Contact Elisabeth Kelly (757-849-2277), Connie Barlow (757-766-0079), or Lew Goodman (757-375-7520) if you have questions.

URGENT NEED, BLOOD DRIVE MAY 20

Outreach

The next Kirkwood Blood Drive is scheduled for **THURSDAY, MAY 20, from 2-7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.** All necessary COVID protocols will be adhered to. Donors can schedule their appointments by going on line to www.redcrossblood.org, sponsor code KirkwoodPC.

All donors are encouraged to complete the RAPIDPASS on the day of the drive. RAPID PASS 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. I am looking for a couple of volunteers to help with registration and in the canteen during the drive.



There is an urgent need for all types of blood now and always. Please prayerfully consider coming out and donating this lifesaving need. If you need assistance making your appointment, contact Cathy.



FUTURE 2021 DATES: August 19 and November 18.

Please mark your calendars.

HUNGRY FOR SERIOUS LEARNING?

Christian Education

These days more and more of us are taking advantage of the growing number of streaming services to access our favorite shows and to explore new types of programming on demand. Our KirkWood subscription to Amplify Media provides free access to several different full-length courses from “The Great Courses.” These typically consist of 20-25 lectures, each about 30 minutes.

A few course titles:

- ◇ “Biblical Wisdom Literature”
- ◇ “Jesus and His Jewish Influences”
- ◇ “Reading Biblical Literature: Genesis to Revelation”
- ◇ ”The History of Christianity: From the Disciples to the Dawn of the Reformation”
- ◇ “Understanding the New Testament”

To access, go to <https://my.amplifymedia.com/kirkwoodpresbyterianchurchyo/welcome>

Enter the congregation access code: **KGWRYP**

Create your own free personal account.

Browse and discover a wide range of new and expanding educational programming for families, children, adults, youth, devotions, women’s Bible study, worship and inspiration, small groups, and challenging issues. Once you register, you can stream via the web, Roku, or iOS and Android apps.

Check it out and let me know what you find. ... *Charlie Reece*

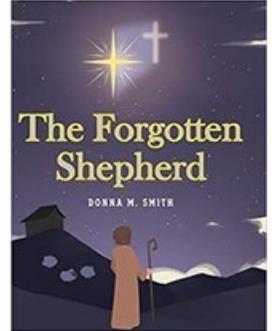
*Adult Sunday School meets Sundays at 11 a.m. via Zoom.
Please check our Facebook page for the link. All are welcome to join!*



CHILDREN'S EDUCATION UPDATE

Christian Education

KirkWood's very own Donna Smith has written her first book. Based on *Luke* Chapter 2, it leads the reader on a journey through the memories and experiences of a shepherd named Nathan. It is wonderfully descriptive, using imagery to make you feel a part of the Christmas and Easter story. You can find the signed copy Donna has graciously donated in the Children's Library. Despite that location, the book was written focusing on older children and is enjoyable for all ages.



The official launch date has not been announced, but we join in celebrating her achievement. See a promotion preview [here](#) on YouTube. Read a more detailed summary [here](#).



KirkWood works diligently each year to make VBS successful, having 50 volunteers give their time one week in July. We have prayerfully considered details on how to safely fill our church mission and God's vision for this summer, and a typical VBS might not be the best option. It might transition to a virtual and Sunday school option. It might grow into a family fun weekend event.

To be a part of the planning and decision process, join our monthly Christian Education Zoom meetings or contact Jeannine Scott directly.

In-person learning and childcare returns! Your help is needed.

On May 2 during the 9:30 a.m. service, we will open in-person Sunday School in Room 2 for children ages 3 through 5th grade. We will start a theme about Moses. Although it is not a complete match of the sermon topic, it will show examples of faith each week.



The nursery will also be open for children under 5 years old. There is overlap to let parents decide what is best. **Masks are requested for children of all ages in the Sunday School room.**

KirkWood is looking for ministry leaders. If you have a passion for supporting the faith of God's children (*of any age*) through Christian education, join us and volunteer today! Team leaders are available to support you. Contact Jeannine Scott or Charlie Reece. See immediate needs for children's ministry at <https://rebrand.ly/kidmin>.



STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH

Stewardship

As I look out the window, I see that our grass needs mowing. The seeds for our garden will be planted within the week. The trees are doing well. The water and the sun that God has provided lately have helped all of this to grow. Do you consider this work of cultivation to be part of your tithe to God, or is it just one more chore in your life?

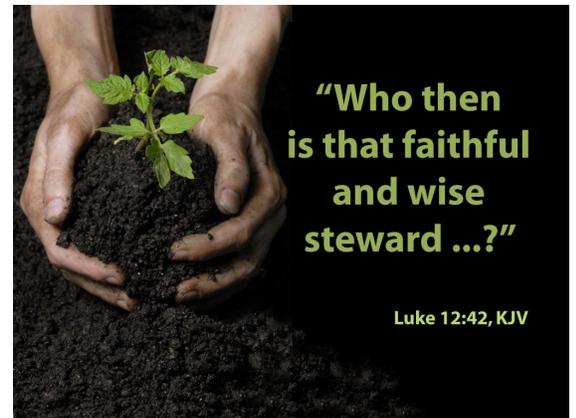
Stewardship of the Earth is just as important to a believer as their money, time, or talent tithes. How is *your* giving going this year, in all areas?

Have you considered the health of the global climate? Do you work to help the Earth to heal, or do you contribute to its downfall? Gus Speth, Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality under President Jimmy Carter once stated, "I used to think that the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that thirty years of good science could address these problems. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation."

A simple request. Purchase a tree to be planted in someone's memory. After all, in Genesis 2:9a we are told, "And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food..." Then in Genesis 1:26 humankind was given the honor of ruling over the planet, and all that is above and below it. How seriously do you take this ruling? Do you accept the privilege and responsibility that comes along with it? Or is that for someone else to grapple with, not me?

A few weeks ago, congregation member Papa Tshiek passed away. One request by his family was to purchase a tree in his honor. "Gifts can be made to the PEVA Congo Partnership Ministries in honor of Papa Tshiek, or you may plant a Memorial Tree(s) in memory of Etienne Kasonga Bote-Tshiek, thru the Arbor Day Foundation, [Memory Tree](#)."

We all can do something for the health of our environment. God has given us the honor of serving Him in this way. If we are willing. Stewardship of the Earth means to leave the world a bit better and to know even one life has breathed easier because you were a good steward.



Joyce Armstrong