

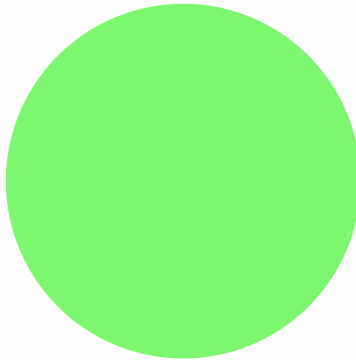


WINTERGARDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# ANNUAL REPORT

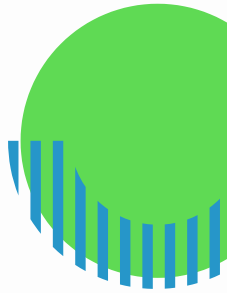


*2024*





# PASTOR'S MESSAGE



When reflecting on 2024, it truly stands out as a very memorable year! From unwinding from the rebuilding after Hurricane Ian, continuing to welcome mission teams to serve in our community, to rededicating our sanctuary, and moving into the journey of building a bigger table for our community, 2024 was full of ups and downs with God carrying us through it all. We continued to address the ever-growing needs of food insecurity in our community, and we are grateful for the support of numerous organizations—be it through funding, prayers, or individuals' contributions. Personally, after a deeply appreciated sabbatical in 2023, it took a little bit of time to get back into the swing of things. 2024 was full of many changes for our faith community as well. We welcomed 8 new members through transfer and reaffirmation of faith and 1 adult baptism. Throughout the year, we encountered many wonderful individuals who remained committed to our mission of providing sustenance to those in need in many different ways. Looking forward to 2025 and seeing what God has in-store for our faith community as we continue to live out our mission “to feed people physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally in our community.” Grateful to be in ministry and mission with you all!

**REV. DEVON ANDREWS**  
PASTOR



# MISSION AND VALUES



Wintergarden Presbyterian Church is renowned in our community for actively living out our faith by serving those who hunger for more than just physical sustenance. Despite being a small congregation of 33 members, we operate the largest food pantry in our county, exemplifying our commitment to meeting both the material and spiritual needs of our neighbors. Additionally, we serve as a host site for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, offering long-term recovery support and welcoming mission teams to aid those affected by disasters like Hurricane Ian, Helene, and Milton. We couldn't live out our mission without the additional 97 friends who join us for worship, support our mission, serve in our community garden and food pantry, and come alongside the work being done in long-term recovery.

Our overarching mission is to "feed people physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally in our community," reflecting our core values of welcome, servant-heartedness, fellowship, and worship. Two foundational scriptures guide our actions: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39) and "I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me" (Matthew 25:40). These passages encapsulate our commitment to loving God, loving our neighbors, and embodying Christ's teachings in practical ways.

## MISSION STATEMENT

We feed people physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally in our community.

## VALUES

### Welcome

We include all people into a warm and friendly environment to worship God.

### Servant Hearts

We are proactively involved in our congregation and community, sharing the gospel of Christ.

### Fellowship

We enjoy one another's company through sharing time and experiences that help us get to know God better.

### Worship

We engage, by faith and prayer, with God wherever we go.

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

A year of slowing down and gaining some stability

Continue to expand our feeding ministry

Share the love of God with everyone we meet

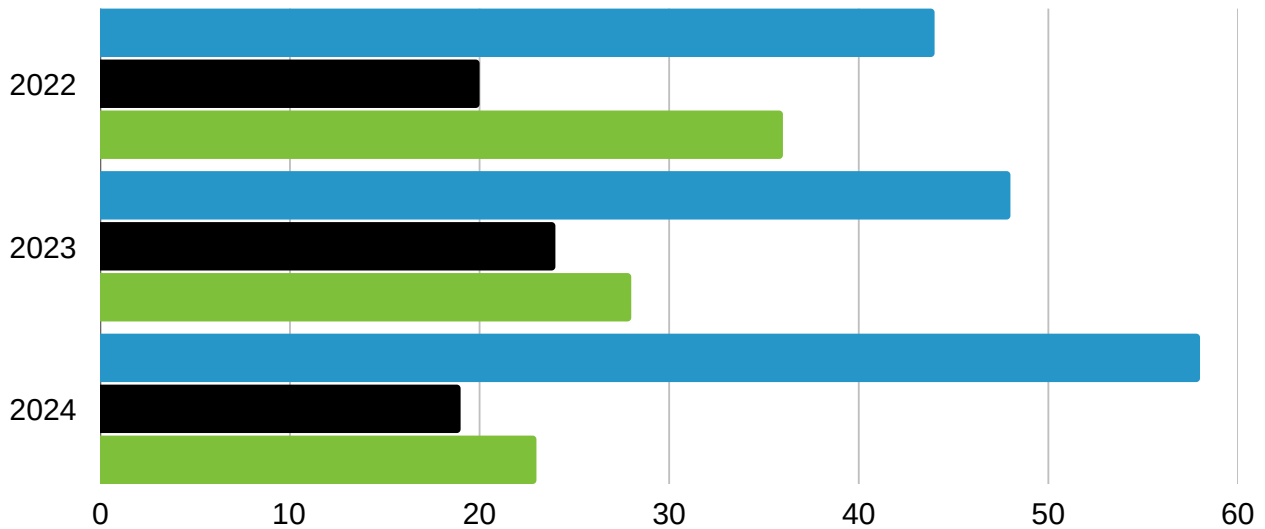


# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



Chart below is % of the budget per category

Mission/Outreach    Discipleship    Worship



- WORSHIP
- DISCIPLESHIP
- MISSION AND OUTREACH

2024 Actual Expenses- \$485,900  
 2023 Actual Expenses- \$221,720  
 2022 Actual Expenses- \$180,030

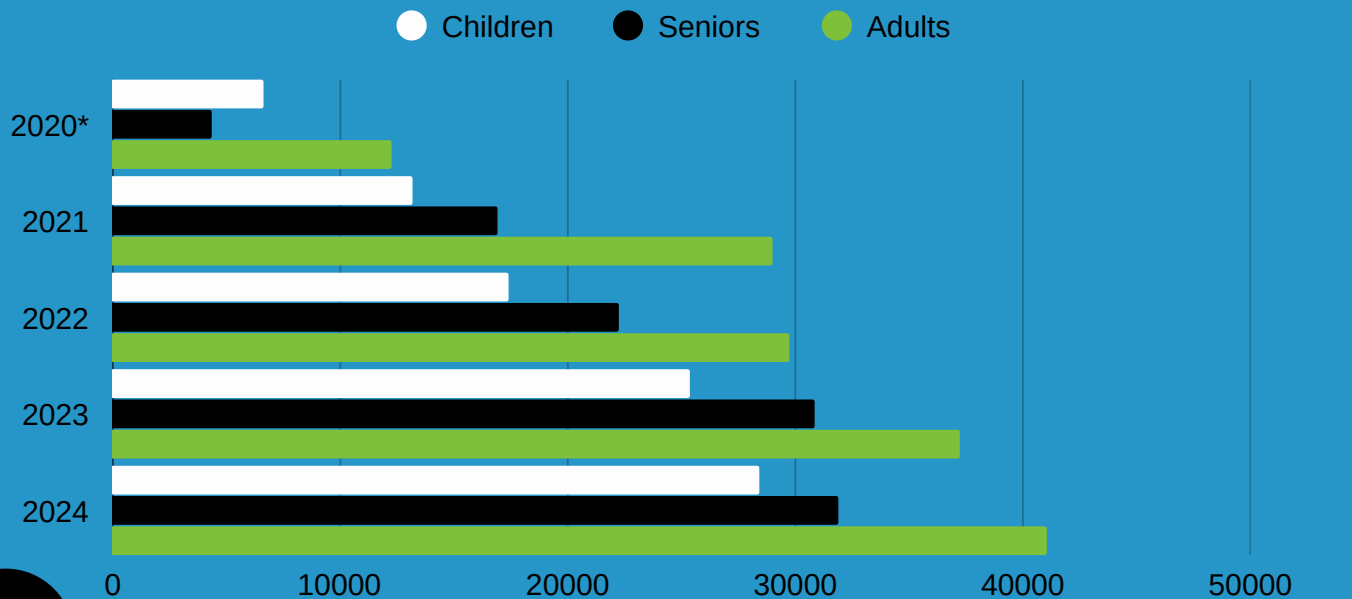
Year after year, our mission and outreach budget continues to grow as we serve out community. The ministry to feed people continues to grow, and our budget continues to expand. By opening our hearts and doors to more people and organizations, our ministry has grown beyond our capacity to do on our own. We are blessed by the grants we have received as well as the amazing people who are called to serve alongside us. This is leading us towards starting a separate 501(c)3 to officially launch a feeding ministry. Our actual expenses for 2024 include the grant funds we were able to distribute to families in our community as well as the shower installation.

# FOOD PANTRY



In 2023, the church brought Kymmie on full-time to serve as the food pantry director. The food pantry served around 500 families (2,000 individuals) each Thursday, with about 20 new applicants who joined weekly in 2024. Over the past year, the demographics have shifted, with more young adults with children now representing the largest group of new clients. The number of children continues to grow as those who receive food.

On the volunteer front, we are thriving. We enjoyed celebrating all our volunteers this past year to tell them thank you for all the amazing ways they give of themselves to serve our community. We now have many year-round volunteers, and for the first time, we experienced no shortage of help during the summer. To effectively manage the growing pantry, we've established teams within the volunteer database, such as the retail and intake teams, creating more leadership opportunities.



Total 2024- 101,357  
 Total 2023- 93,433  
 Total 2022- 69,369  
 Total 2021- 59,076  
 \*Total 2020- 23,221 (only Mar. - Dec. #s)







# COMMUNITY GARDEN, FOOD FOREST, AND SENSORY GARDEN



With 20 garden beds for community members to care for and grow food for their families and 6 garden beds dedicated to growing food for the neighbors, our community garden is blooming. From 2023 to 2024, we have not had as active of participation in the community garden because so many were rebuilding their homes and lives after Hurricane Ian, Helene, and Milton. But our food forest continues producing an abundance of fruit and we have made significant strides in our sensory garden. The butterfly and bee garden, color garden, and taste garden are fully operational. We have loved partnering with Keep Charlotte Beautiful for our Lettuce Learn Homeschool Group, Wild + Wonderful Homeschool Group, and the Garden Gals. Looking forward to continued completion of more projects in 2025.

Community Garden

Food Forest

Sensory Garden





# MORE ON THE FEEDING MINISTRY



Wintergarden Pantry was awarded a \$2,500 grant from Harry Chapin Food Bank, which was used to purchase a second pallet jack with a scale and four metal shelving units. Additionally, we were designated as “A Pantry of Excellence” by Harry Chapin and received a refrigerated van for our smaller retail pickups. We must remain compliant with Harry Chapin for three years, after which the van will be ours to use as we wish.

Additionally, Charlotte Community Cooperative homeschool students have been using the garden area on Monday afternoons for outdoor recreation, learning about and helping to care for the plants. Alexandria Sosa has taken on additional planting, maintenance, and harvesting responsibilities, including the six pantry beds. Unfortunately, the Garden Gals are no longer active on campus, as most have moved away. We are so blessed by all the work the Garden Gals did to make our garden beautiful.

**KYMMIE LAURENCE**  
FOOD PANTRY DIRECTOR





# LONG-TERM RECOVERY



Flash back to pre-Ian: there was a group of us wondering how we might serve our neighbors better. We met, wondered, researched... Then with Ian it was clear - we were to help our neighbors recover. With that we walked forward in faith toward recovery work. Over time the projects evolved from mostly “muck and guts” to finishing homes and welcoming families back. As we stepped out into this unknown work, God provided funding and partners for us, and over time it continued to evolve and grow. We learned a lot, and in the end we believe we did what we were called to do for and with our neighbors.

Last year we reported for 2023 that we had 210 volunteers put in 8,477 hours at 25 sites. Well, in 2024 we substantially increased that impact! In 2024 we hosted 23 groups, which included 367 volunteers. Those volunteers worked 11,687 hours repairing the homes of 56 - the homes for 142 people in those homes. Most of the homes and families impacted were through the work of our volunteers, but we also had grant funds that supported the purchase of building materials for some of those homes. Regarding grants, we currently are working with three grants for storm related repairs.



## VOLUNTEERS

## THOSE SERVED

## FUNDING/GRANT

23 volunteer groups hosted

56 homes worked in

SBP-\$10,000  
(AmeriCorps Position)

367 unique volunteers

142 people served

PDA-\$40,000  
FLAPDAN-\$12,000

56 unique projects

CFS- \$50,000

11,687 Volunteer Hours

Grants to Homeowners  
2024:  
\$34,222.10

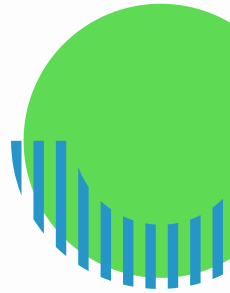
Grants for Administration  
2024:  
\$22,500







# MORE ON LTR...



The grants we received:

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA): We were granted \$15,000 restricted to Ian related repairs only. At the end of 2024, the balance was \$9,053.90. As of February 2025, the current balance is \$0.
- Florida Presbyterian Disaster Network (FLAPDAN) - We were granted \$12,000 for repairs related to Helen/Milton only. At the end of 2024, the balance was \$12,000 because it is saved for homeowners who experienced hurricane damage from Ian, Helene, and Milton. As of February 2025, the current balance is \$2,260.00.
- Community Foundation of Sarasota (CFS) - We were granted \$47,500 for disaster related home repairs. These funds are the most flexible and can be used on all three storms. At the end of 2024, the balance was \$34,224. As of February 2025, the current balance is \$17,914.44.

Most of the funds were used in conjunction with the work teams - helping with materials for homes they were working on. We're actually wrapping up the PDA grant. However, we will continue to help repair homes through the purchase of building materials and repairs as long as the other funds can be stretched.

We would like to highlight that God provided mightily in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian with an outpouring of support, collaboration, and new partnerships. None of our recovery work could have happened without the help of partners who provide us with a bunkhouse trailer, construction coordinators, funds for building materials, and other assistance. Without the support of these disaster recovery partners, we could not be where we are. We are grateful to God for bringing them to us.

- Community Foundation of Sarasota County: <https://www.cfsarasota.org/>
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (PDA): <https://pda.pcusa.org/>
- Missions on Wheels: [www.missionsonwheels.org](http://www.missionsonwheels.org)
- SBP: [sbpusa.org](http://sbpusa.org)
- Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network: <https://www.flapdan.org/>
- The Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church (FLUMC): <https://www.flumc.org/hurricane-ian>
- Mennonite Disaster Services: <https://mds.org/>
- Information Technology Disaster Resource Center (ITDRC): <https://www.itdrc.org/>



**WENDY RAINEY**  
AMERICORPS MEMBER

# MORE MINISTRIES



## Care Team

- The Care Team at Wintergarden has been doing an amazing job under the leadership of Sue H. with putting in processes and procedures and fine-tuning the roles and responsibilities of the team. From food deliveries, to birthday and anniversary cards, to visitations, and so much more, this wonderful group is doing a great job at making sure our community is cared for.

## NA and AA Recovery Groups

- Wintergarden continues to host multiple recovery programs every week. We currently have 4 NA groups meeting weekly and monthly, the NA Peace River leadership meeting monthly, and 1 AA (Men's group) that meets weekly. We are also continuing to be a place of healing for many on their recovery journeys.

## Charlotte Community Co-Op Home school program

- In June of 2024, a few parents gathered to discuss the need for a co-op program that focused on teaching primary subjects to children in our area. In September, we launched the Charlotte Community Co-Op with 29 children. The group continues to meet every Monday during the school year. We are grateful that Kymmie Laurence and Alexandria Sosa are taking lead on this wonderful outreach into our community.

## Visually Impaired Peer Support Group

- Most Tuesdays, we have a group that gathers that is a peer support group for those who are visually impaired. This group has a wonderful time together playing cards, listening to speakers, learning more about community resources, music, and treats!

## Girl Scout Troop

- In 2023, we welcome a Girl Scout Troop to share our facility. The group gathers every Monday during the school year. They have been involved in some work in the garden and enjoy their weekly meetings here.

## Neighborhood Watch

- Once a month, we continue to host the O'Hara Neighborhood Watch Group to learn more about crime in the community and how they can help support their neighbors through trying times.

## Tables for More

- During Lent in 2024, we enjoyed gathering together for a meal with events called "Tables for More." Colleen Moravek and Jane Simser coordinated these wonderful gatherings where so many folks of our congregation gathered together.

## The Journey to Building a Bigger Table

- In 2024, we started the journey to dig deeper into what it meant for our congregation to truly build a bigger table. As a Matthew 25 congregation, we truly hope to keep embracing the 3 core pillars of building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. As we work towards embracing these pillars more in 2025 and beyond, we are also going to dive deeper into the intersectional priorities as well: climate change, militarism, gender justice and heteropatriarchy. <https://www.pcusa.org/matthew25>



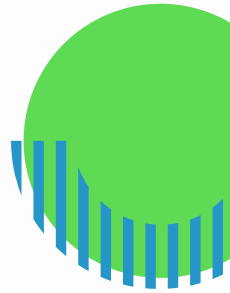


# FUTURE PLANS...



## Feeding Ministry

As of February 8th, the outdoor kitchen structure is nearly complete. Rich, Rick, Lamont, Jim, Colleen, and Cliff have shown remarkable dedication to this project. We anticipate hosting an official event by March 2025. The outdoor kitchen has come to life through the Blessing Grant we received from Peace River Presbytery and through a generous donation from our community for the garden ministry.



We have also begun fundraising to support the pantry financially. We will host dinners on the first Saturday of each month, and hopefully a mid-month breakfast. All contributions will directly benefit the pantry. Our fundraising team has already organized one dinner, raising \$1,720, and we plan to separate the team into a dinner team and a breakfast team.

We are in the process of establishing a 501c3 to separate the pantry, food forest, community garden, and long-term recovery from Wintergarden Presbyterian, with the aim of completing this by summer 2025. The primary motivation for creating a separate nonprofit is to access more financial support through grants that we are currently ineligible for due to our religious status.

## Long-Term Recovery

Our current collaboration with MDS will wrap up at the end of March. And as it stands now, FLUMC is also wrapping up the work they have in our area. In other words, our partners are getting ready to move on to help other areas. We're glad to know that help will come for those other places badly in need of assistance. We have also offered "lessons learned" support to sites now considering stepping into this work, but it leaves us with the question, "what does this mean going forward?"

We will remain a "PDA Host Site," but realistically, we know that it's likely that those willing to help will choose other locations - places with more recent disasters. Therefore, we believe our level of recovery work will be drastically reduced. We are also working with the county to be a host site for Emergency Response Teams for the next storm. In addition, we are working to be better prepared as a church for all types of emergencies and are developing a church emergency plan. Once it's finished, we hope to do some training around what to do here at the church in various emergency situations. Additionally, we will continue to encourage hurricane preparedness on our website and on Facebook.





# FUTURE PLANS...



## Ministry Teams

As 2025 has started, we have launched two new ministry teams for help in leadership of our congregation. Our Matthew 25 Team and our Preaching and Teaching Team have had their first couple of meetings and are preparing for the year. More teams will be developed over the course of this year to help with leading the mission and ministry of our congregation.



## Pastor Devon's Update

Last July, Pastor Devon started working part-time with Tidewell Hospice as a social worker. Devon has always been bi-vocational in her call to Wintergarden. Then in November of 2024, Devon was offered a position with Tidewell Hospice to be the social worker at the Village on the Isle Hospice House. In December, Devon started working at the hospice house 30 hours a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday). Tidewell was able to offer Devon health insurance, a 403b option for investing, and more financial security for her family. In addition, they are very understanding of the fact that Devon is also the pastor of this congregation. There is flexibility to also take care of "church stuff" when she is at Tidewell. Devon will be working towards obtaining her licensure as a social worker over these next few years as well. In December, we voted to change Devon's call status to stated supply, which allows for our congregation to not have to pay for the Board of Pensions package. Devon's contract with Wintergarden is for 20 hours a week and she is in the office on Wednesday and Sunday for worship.

## Final Reflections from Pastor Devon

As I completed the annual statistics for the denomination for 2024, there were a few things that surprised me. The first was when I truly counted our active membership base. Somehow over the years, we had not removed the people who were moved to inactive status off our of membership numbers. A major error on our end. What that means is that our true membership for our congregation is 33 members. Out of our 33 members, 4 have moved out of the area, 2 primarily worship online, 2 are worshipping at another church, and 2 have chosen to not worship anywhere else. Meaning, we have 23 active members plus many wonderful children of our congregation! You might ask how would 23 members and our amazing children sustain the mission and ministry of Wintergarden? Well, 23 people don't! God continues to work in and through our community and sends the most amazing people to empower and encourage us to live out our mission. In addition to those 23 active members, we have about 47 children and adults who call Wintergarden their faith community and join us in worship in person or online throughout the year and over 53 volunteers from the community who serve in our food pantry, community garden, and long-term recovery.







WINTERGARDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THANK YOU



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