

Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice. Psalm 112:5

This is the verse shared this year for the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering that we will collect in December. RMMO is always about celebrating, thanking, and lifting up our servant leaders. The offering originated in the mid-1930s as the Communion Fellowship Offering and since 1977 has been known as RMMO. The RMMO funds we collect are distributed as thank you checks to retired ordained ministers and commissioned missionaries who have devoted 15 years or more to ABCUSA, as well as surviving spouses. A certain portion of funds is also allocated for direct emergency assistance. Our goal this year is \$1,400, please consider this offering during the month of December.

Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering

RMMO2023: Good will come.

“Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice.” — Psalm 112: 5 (NIV)



Sunset Hills Baptist Church
9416 Pacific Street
Omaha, NE 68114

Contact us at:
402-391-0820
www.sunsethillschurch.org
sunset@sunsethillschurch.org

Sunset Hills Baptist Church

December 2023

Newsletter

Welcome vs. Afterthought

*Now all our words are written down in chalk, out in the rain out on the sidewalk
If all our heartaches were in a stack, they'd go all the way up to heaven and back
We don't know all the trouble we're in; we don't know how to get home again
Jesus, come and save us from our sin
-- Richie Furay, "Chalk"*

For so many years, Christmas celebration was a family-of-origin-only affair. Specifically, my mom's family of origin: her parents, her kids, and her sister's family. So much so that seeing not just one, but two (!) new in-laws one fine Christmas threw the kids and the cooks into existential disarray – what my mom would call “a tizzy.” On the kids' side of things, there was no way to outguess how we needed to behave around the newbies. Could they take a joke? Was I going to sacrifice the last piece of pecan pie to somebody I barely knew? Would they play touch football later in the afternoon? From the cooks' angle, would a new family member consume enough Christmas dinner to qualify as a “good eater”? If the newbies were female, did they help enough in the kitchen to do some good without treading on someone else's territory?

These were crucial issues to settle early in the day. To spare me the adult conversation, my grandma sent me out the door with half a cinnamon roll and the encouragement to check out the snow on the homestead's sledding hill.

I'm still not sure how they pulled it off but you'll be pleased to note that everyone, newbies and blood relations alike, survived that Christmas.

Later in life, it was my turn to introduce Annie to Christmas with my side of the family. I wasn't exactly her knight in shining armor that first Christmas together, because the role of “Chief Welcomer” was completely new to me. I was sure by the time we were driving home that she'd

Continued on Page 2

had a perfectly dismal Christmas being treated like an afterthought. I missed some prime opportunities to show Annie and my family how much I valued her. The fact that we're 43 years and counting into our marriage is testimony to her grace toward me.

One vital question to ask this Christmas, then, is "How am I welcoming Jesus into my Christmas, into my life, this year?" When Jesus makes Himself known to you, is your response indifferent because He's just an afterthought for you? Are you even hostile because He threatens your sense of "normal"? Or do you respond to His grace extended toward you even though we've all had our issues in welcoming Him to invade our hearts?

God grant us the focus necessary to "...fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" and make sure that 1) we own our need to welcome Him, and 2) we follow through on that welcome.

Here's our need: *We don't know all the trouble we're in. We don't know how to get home again. Here's the request for the ultimate Christmas gift: Jesus, come and save us from our sin.*

Here's the follow-through: Jesus is the cause of this celebration, not the afterthought. He deserves the best welcome we can muster.

May God richly bless you and yours this holiday season! Merry Christmas!

-- Steve Wamberg



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia this year, please have orders turned in no later than Sunday, December 17. Cost is \$11 per plant. Please call the office if you have questions. Thank you!

Prayers for Health, Healing, and Strength

Jim Koppenhaver	Anji	Lamya and Melody	Noah Hamlin
Desmond	Diana LaCroix	Carol Lorenzen	Kamla Pala
Natalie Vankat	Deanne Caughey	Antonittie Johnson	Terry Anson Family
Bob Molby	Patty Martin	Nancy Berney	George & Phyllis Meyer
Rev. Rick Wheatley	Norma Larsen	Jack & Carol Welch	Kim Wille
Barb Ganey	Glenn Kilpatrick	Dan & Marge Todd	Mark & Ruth Steele
Nancy Quinnette			

On-going prayers of well-being for shut-ins and military personnel.

For regular prayer requests, please text or call and leave a message for Dot North at 402-658-6401, emails may not be seen in a timely manner. She will confirm that your request was received and it will be sent out to the prayer chain. Your prayers are very important.

Amber Dale introduced all new Sunset Hills members. Diane Workman reviewed each ministry and what they do and who is leading them.

Duties of the Ministry Council: Lead and coordinate the implementation of the vision and mission statements in accordance with God's will as we understand it.

Discipleship Ministry – Vacant – That we can provide opportunities to move people deeper in their relationship with Christ through such things as Sunday school attendance, Bible studies, becoming involved in the church beyond the four walls of the church building, and to mentor and encourage new Christians and members of Sunset Hills Baptist Church.

Mission/Outreach Ministry – Terry Anderson – This ministry supports our national and international missionaries by promoting the four major mission offerings of the year. This ministry also plans and encourages mission trips, involvement in ABW and ABM, as well as outreach activities in the local community.

Pastor/Staff Relations Ministry – Ron Reed – This ministry gives encouragement, provides feedback, and helps develop open communication between the staff, the pastor and the congregation. They are responsible for Pastor, Administrative Assistant, Custodial staff and Praise Team compensation, pastoral development/continuing education, conflict resolution and to encourage gifted individuals into ministerial leadership and vocation.

Prayer Ministry – Dot North – Prayer Ministry's goal is to strengthen our biblical understanding of the purpose of prayer and through corporate prayer, move everyone into a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Prayer should be the foundation upon which we do all things.

Shepherding Ministry – Amber Dale – Shepherding provides a means of caring for our church family by offering encouragement and support. This ministry is responsible for managing the Benevolent Fund, providing physical assistance such as transportation, organizing home and hospital visits, and managing membership records.

Stewardship Ministry – Ron Reed interim – This ministry is responsible for oversight of all church property.

Worship Ministry – Jason Workman – Within this ministry lies the responsibility for the music program, special holiday services, Sunday morning hospitality, sanctuary decorations, ushers, as well as the audio-visual resources used during worship services.

Safety/Security Ministry – Jason Workman – Safety/Security provides physical security and safety for all people that use the church facility and property.

Financial Ministry – Vacant – We are moving this out from Stewardship and having its own ministry. If interested in financial activities and record keeping, we are looking for a leader. They will oversee the financial activities of the church and maintain its books and financial records.

Date	Attendance	Giving
October 29	60	\$2,656.17
November 5	62	\$5,563.84
November 12	69	\$3,051.82
November 19	87	\$4,385.00
November 26	60	\$3,386.82


SHBC Financial Scoreboard	
October Income	\$ 17,761
YTD Income	\$174,098
October Expenses	\$ 20,928
YTD Expenses	\$136,280

1 Terri Rich
6 Nalini Anderson
7 David Nallathambi
14 Taylor Hedrick
18 Cameron Rich
19 Kayla Booth
21 Amariana White
24 Steve Combs
24 Rosemary Gordon
25 Jean Larsen
27 Roberta Williston



Bible Study

Join Rev. Steve on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. for Bible Study. All are welcome.



Monthly Prayer Meeting

Monday, December 4
6:00 p.m.

Women Mentoring Women
December 11
6:30 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.



Hanging of the Greens
10:00 a.m., Saturday, December 2

Pastor Staff Relations Ministry Committee
December News - Ron Reed

We all look forward to Rev. Steve and Annie's leadership as we come together to grow God's church and kingdom. We have been hungry for positive change, and we all need to do our part in it. With considerable work, our committee has updated each agreement for our paid staff. Congregation, we're here to serve in confidence.

Nancy Berney, Denise Vanosdall, Jason Rich, Linda Wheatley, and Ron Reed

Thank You To our Friends and Family at Sunset Hills,

Thank you for your generous gift to mark Pastor's Appreciation Month! Annie and I are both humbled and blessed to serve you, and to co-labor with you and the holy Spirit to build out God's Kingdom! Thank you for your prayers and support.

Much love in Christ,
Pastor Steve and Annie

Continued from Page 7

Amendments and revisions of the bylaws - The ministry council has been updating them over the last year. One correction was needed in the Stewardship Ministry section. Omit financial wording in description. Motion made and passed to accept changes to bylaws after correction is made.

The second order of business is the 2024 budget.

The Ministry council will closely monitor the budget through 2024. Motion made and passed to accept the budget for 2024.

Welcome Pastor Steve and Annie to our congregation. We will be having the pastor's installation service on Sunday, November 19 by our new executive minister Rev. Dr. Greg Mamula. We hope that you will attend. Thank you for staying with us today.



Stewardship Ministry Team December news - Ron Reed

The Stewardship Ministry Team met briefly on November 19. I thanked each one sincerely for serving God in this ministry, then shared that we seriously need new leadership. The last 3 years of looking for a new leader for this ministry have failed. The input that followed threw the door wide open for change. The team in attendance believes we need to break up the responsibilities, with leaders managing each sub-ministry, overseen by the Stewardship Ministry Leader. We will be meeting in January to pursue this reorganization. Merry Christmas.



Men's Study Group December news - Ron Reed

Ladies, this study has appealed to women. You're invited to join us! There are more books available for a modest \$6 contribution. We have just begun the study of *What Would Jesus Ask?* by the late Dr. Paul Welter, "For those who want to ask questions as Jesus did that will jump-start family members and friends to take needed moral-spiritual actions." Contact Rev. Steve Wamberg, Don Zak, Bob Molby, Rick Wheatley, Marvin Vanosdall, Bob Slechta, or Ron Reed; who has the books, if you wish to join us in this study by way of Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30.

Upcoming Sermon Schedule

December 3	Family Tree: A Delicate History	<i>Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:21-38</i>
December 10	Finding Home in a Refugee World	<i>Matthew 1:18-25. 2:13-23</i>
December 17	Welcome and Worship = Wisdom	<i>Matthew 2:1-12</i>
December 24	Christmas Eve Service	Stories of Jesus' Birth
December 31	"Watchnoon" Prayer Service	Intentional Prayer and Intercession

**Sunset Hills Baptist Church
Ministry Council Minutes
November 13, 2024**

Attendees: Rev. Steve Wamberg; Moderator, Diane Workman; Music/Worship and Safety/Security, Rev. Jason Workman; Pastor/Staff Relations and Stewardship (interim), Ron Reed; Prayer, Dot North; Treasurer, Doug Larsen; Church Clerk, Becki Pike; Shepherding, Amber Dale; Missions/Outreach, Terry Anderson; Visitors, Scott Darden, Bob Molby

Devotion and Prayer: Rev. Wamberg

Monthly Treasurer Report: Doug Larsen

- Discuss budget discrepancies between Ministry Council and church-wide vote. Motion passed to accept budget as presented at annual meeting.

Business:

Safety and Security: Rev. Jason Workman

- Email Safety – resent hacked emails – Nothing the church can do to stop this from happening.
- Possibly making handouts about online safety.

Music/Worship: Rev. Jason Workman

- Going to see about having a dedicated mic for fellowship hall.

Pastor/Staff Relations: Ron Reed

- Please review 2024 contracts prior to meeting and be ready to discuss. Changes that were made were approved to the contracts that were discussed. We're looking at changing the process going forward to streamline the process.
- Looking at updating and amending the facilities agreement with outside groups using the church.

Shepherding: Amber Dale – no updates

Missions/Outreach: Terry Anderson

- Looking into March and through the end of year for outreach opportunities. Reading at Pine Elementary is in the works.

Prayer: Dot North – no updates

Ministry Council:

- Prepare for Annual Business Meeting
- Goals for December meeting: Start planning ministry yearly goals and objectives: What is God calling us to accomplish in the next year? At least 2-3 goals per ministry due by the December meeting.
- Start preparing Annual Report – Reports to be turned in by December 18 to Denise.

Discipleship: Vacant

- Any Sunday school materials needed going into 2024? Jason is needing books for Bible study on James.

Stewardship: Vacant (Ron Reed interim)

- Cracks in the parking lot have been filled and erosion work has been completed.
- Soffits have water damage that will need to be fixed.
- Bids to fix lighting issues with exit signs, battery backups, and outside lighting have been received.
- In discussion with the owner of the company that damaged the parking lot over the summer while working on the Verizon tower.

Financial: Vacant

December, January, February Council/Ministry preparations

Prayer: Rev. Jason Workman

Next Meeting – Monday, December 18, 6:30 p.m.

.....
Missions and Outreach Ministry

With the December mission project -- the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering -- ready to go, it's a good time to look toward 2024 and possible projects we might consider.

In the past, Sunset Hills has selected a monthly missions project. We can continue with those same recipients, or we can place our focus on new projects.

The congregation can help identify what those new projects might be. Our members are the eyes and ears out in the public. You all are welcome and encouraged to share what group or activity might be worthy of our missions. Please contact me with your ideas. The ministry members will determine what will be our best opportunities.

Lastly, we thank everyone who contributed in 2023 to missions and outreach projects, either in funds, time or effort. Your participation makes these projects worthwhile.

-- Terry Anderson, Missions and Outreach Ministry leader

.....
Adult Sunday School December news - Ron Reed

Our study in Acts has been very enlightening. Thanks to Rev. Rick Wheatley for leading this study. Our next biblically-based topic which will follow this study, will be chosen by the class in December. We meet in the lower-level double classroom Sunday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00 and we'd love to have others join us.

Vision Statement

Communicate the love of God so all may experience the joy of a relationship with Christ.

Mission Statement

Build disciples by empowering each church participant to practice personal and congregational mission to reach people in our everyday lives.