



Come Join Us!

Advent Open House

Saturday, December 14
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Light refreshments served; just bring yourselves!

Pastor Steve and Annie
1663 South Street
Blair, NE 68008



Sunset Hills Baptist Church

December 2024

Newsletter

Silver Bells, Anyone?

City sidewalks, busy sidewalks....

“Can you get out of my way?”

Josh moves at a slower pace because his calorie intake today isn’t sufficient to support his walking at a brisk shopper’s pace the Wednesday before Christmas. He’s not staggering right now. He’s just not moving fast enough for the downtown sidewalk traffic. The sub-freezing air is being driven by a constant breeze. Not much to that wind, but it still reduces the temperature’s impact by another seven degrees into single digits.

Dressed in holiday style...

“Mom, he stinks!”

This is Josh’s first Christmas as a homeless person. He was kicked out of his home, probably rightly so, when he lost control of his temper and took his first swing ever at his mother. (Good thing he was so drunk that he missed.)


Josh is still learning the ropes. He needs to find someplace that will maybe give him a change of clothes and the stuff he needs for a sponge bath. He needs a warmer coat. He also needs to eat, soon.

In the air, there’s a feeling of Christmas...

Josh stops for a moment to survey the setting around him. He sees a guy he might be able to talk to, who is manning a Salvation Army bucket. Josh walks over, letting shoppers pass by him, trying to stay downwind of as many people as possible. Josh doesn’t even open his mouth and the guy looks at his watch, looks at Josh, and speaks.

“Dude, you can still make it to the Mission for dinner. Straight down Tejon, right at Las Vegas Street. Twenty-minute walk, and you’ve still got half an hour to be there.”

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Josh makes it a few minutes ahead of time. Samaritan’s Kitchen is warm, and they let people in before the meal starts. He finds an empty chair between two guys who sort of look like he does. The food is hot and seems to warm up the conversation around the table. Josh discovers that there are options for homeless people in Colorado Springs. Most of the recovery programs sound way too restrictive for him, at least as he hears about them from those around the table.

Josh also knows he can’t stay homeless forever. At least he hopes he won’t. His mom asked him to come home for the family Christmas meal, but also made it clear he wasn’t welcome to stay. He’s learned from his new friends that the Mission has a community meal two days before Christmas. Maybe if he plays it right, he can eat well for a few days running.

But then, he’ll have some hard decisions to make before the really cold weather hits. Detox? A recovery program? Ride out the winter and hope for an early spring? Sober up and beg to come home until a job comes along?

Soon it will be Christmas Day...

Josh stabs at his dessert and shakes his head. *How did Christmas end up like this, anyway?*

He’s too much of a rookie to know it, but almost everyone else in the room is sharing the same thought.

Prayer Requests and Concerns

Health Concerns

Rob via Carol/Cheryl	Karen via Linda H.	Brooks via Dot N.	Emily via Cheryl A.
Brenda/Keith Baker	Marvene via Jill G.	Shirley via Jill G.	Diane Workman
Lou Riggs	Millie via Jill G.	Nina Little	Phyllis Meyer
Ruth Steele	Deb Vetter	Dan Allman	Gary Peterson
Linda via Cindy C.	Brenda via Kathy K.	Unspoken Prayers	

Other Concerns

- Pray for the missing children
- Pray for those with issues with co-workers and/or family members
- Continue to pray for those with ongoing mental and physical health problems
- Continue to pray for those in mourning
- Pray for all teachers, including Sunday school teachers and home-school teachers
- Pray for our church family and our Pastor and church leaders and groups
- Pray for those seeking employment opportunities/advancements
- On-going prayers of well-being for shut-ins and military personnel
- Pray for our country.

Confidential prayer requests may be left in the prayer box on the wall in the narthex.

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 requests are very important to us.

I would like to thank the members of the Staff Relations Committee, Ron Reed, Nancy Berney, Linda Wheatley and Denise Vanosdall for their time and service this past year. We look forward to working with our church family in 2025. Blessings,

Gary Peterson, Chairman

Adult Sunday School December Update

We invite you to join us as we grow in faith and fellowship. Our current study is *Slaying the Giants in Your Life* by Dr. David Jeremiah. Topic handouts are provided, so if you'd like to attend, please let me know. In the love of Christ,

Ron Reed

Dear members of Sunset Hills,

Thank you for your generous gift for our cabin project. Your donation will help us finish this project during the upcoming winter months. We are so excited to wrap this up! We appreciate your prayers and continued support of camp.

Blessings! Bev

Thank You

**Monthly Prayer Meeting
Monday, December 2
6:00 p.m.**

Missions and Outreach Ministry – Terry Anderson

The year for Missions and Outreach Ministry will finish with two of its long-standing projects. The Angel Tree gifts will be collected for residents at Maple Crest Health Center in Benson. **Wrapped gifts need to be returned to the church no later than Sunday, December 15.** The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering will be taken in December. Several of our members are beneficiaries of this annual collection by ABC-USA. Ministry team members are beginning to work on 2025 planning and projects.

**Stewardship Ministry Team
December Update**

We welcome Cindy Combs to our ministry as Events Leader. We give sincere thanks to Josh Gilliland for replacing the south-west, exterior light fixture. Our dear brother Doug Larsen will be serving with me occasionally to take care of the needs of God's house. We are still in need of a Facilities Leader and occasional help with open tasks. Our next team meeting will be scheduled for January. Many occasionally serving together lightens the load of a few. Blessings!

Ron Reed

**Men's Study Group December Update
Ron Reed**

Our group welcomed Kooper Webb and Don Mummey last month. We are currently in the study of *The Israel Course Christians United for Israel*. We meet by way of Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30. If you are interested in joining us as we go deeper in biblical studies, please contact Don Zak, Retired Pastors Bob Molby or Rick Wheatly, Bob Slechta, Pastor Steve Wamberg, Marvin Vanosdall, Gary Peterson, Judah Anaya, Kooper Webb, Don Mummey, or Ron Reed

Date	Attendance	Giving
November 3	57	\$8,055.00
November 10	58	\$3,865.00
November 17	75	\$2,361.92
November 24	70	\$2,225.00

SHBC Financial Scoreboard

October Income \$ 18,401
October Expenses \$ 12,795

YTD Income \$148,123
YTD Expenses \$155,091

Upcoming Sermon Schedule

Dec. 1 Shipwrecked at the Stable Door *Hebrews 1:1-3, 4:15-16; Philippians 2:5-11*
 Dec. 8 When the Gift is Severe Mercy *Job 3:24-26; Romans 5:1-5*
 Dec. 15 Road Weary and Staying Alive *Matthew 2:1-16*
 Dec. 22 Big Score for the Common Folk *Luke 2:1-20*
 Dec. 29 Pastor Jason TBD

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



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.

Bible Study

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



Wednesday, December 11
 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

RetroActive

“Youth Group for Adults”

Christmas Cards Needed

The women’s group would like to collect Christmas cards to send to residents at adult care facilities in the area. A box is in the narthex to collect your donations through December 8. Thank you!

The next Family Gathering
will be on Friday, December 6
from
6:00—8:00 p.m.

A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) 2024

Each year, during the month of December traditionally, we at Sunset Hills Baptist Church take the annual Thank You Offering for all retired ministers and missionaries within the American Baptist Churches USA. TOGETHER, WE REMEMBER is the theme for this year's offering with the following scriptural theme: “Remember the wondrous works that the Lord has done.” 1 Chronicles 16:2 (ESV).



Why should our congregation give? Retired ministers and missionaries within the ABCUSA have over the years devoted their lives to celebrating the wondrous works of the Lord in worship, in service, and in mission. Gifts to RMMO are distributed to eligible retired clergy and missionaries and their widowed spouses in the form of a thank-you check each year in the month of November which is a tangible expression of our enduring gratitude for their service. We at Sunset Hills have three recipients from this annual offering: Pastor Bob Molby, Roberta Williston (widow of a retired clergy) and myself.

Our challenge as in all of our other annual offerings is \$1,400.00 and hopefully much more. What I like about this December is that we have five Sundays to reach our goal and beyond. December is often challenging with many sources of solicitations from many worthy organizations. So I suggest you give early beginning Sunday, December 1. TOGETHER, WE REMEMBER. Let’s get it done!

Pastor Rick Wheatley, Mission Committee

Christmas Eve Service
6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 24

Women Mentoring Women
Monday, December 9 and 23
6:30 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.
Breakfast at A Catered Affair
December 7 at 1:15 p.m.



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia plant this year, cost is \$11. Plants may be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service. Orders are due by Sunday, December 15.

Sunset Hills Baptist Church
Ministry Council Minutes
November 18, 2024

Attendees: Rev. Steve Wamberg; Moderator, Diane Workman; Safety/Security, Worship/Music, Finance (Interim), Rev. Jason Workman; Shepherding, Amber Dale; Missions/Outreach, Terry Anderson; Prayer, Dot North; Stewardship, Ron Reed (Interim); Pastor/Staff Relations, Gary Peterson; Treasurer, Doug Larsen; Church Clerk, Becki Pike

Devotion and Prayer – Rev. Wamberg – *1 John 2:1-6*

Business:

Shepherding – Amber Dale

- Sunday school children baked pumpkin bread and made baskets for shut ins. The children also made cards.
- Amber met with Denise and went over the directory, active membership roll and birthday and anniversary lists. Amber is working to get missing birthdays and anniversaries. She will be getting postage and any cards for next year soon.
- The Shepherding Ministry will be sending Christmas cards to all our shut-in members.

Missions/Outreach – Terry Anderson

- The Missions and Outreach Ministry team met to review 2024 projects and look ahead to 2025.
- Yet to be completed this year are the winter wear gear for Pine Elementary School, Angel Tree for Maple Crest and the annual Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering. Attempts will be made to spread out some projects, so they don't fall too heavily on the congregation in the last quarter of the year.
- Reevaluation will be made for Trunk or Treat, since this year had minimal visits by the community.
- The financial support for a missionary team in Japan is in the 2025 budget.
- A possible new project for 2025 is a bloodmobile visit.

Prayer – Dot North

- No update.

Stewardship – Ron Reed (Interim)

- Ron Reed shared that he had met with Cindy Combs after she expressed interest in serving as the Events Leader. She was informed at length of the responsibilities and provided with written Stewardship Ministry information. She was asked to think and pray about it before deciding. She informed Ron that she would like to give it a try. The team was supportive.
- The southwest exterior light fixture will be replaced with one that will light the front area much better.
- Proposals for professional spot and area carpet cleaning were \$1,000 plus. Keith Baker has offered a Pro Rug Doctor so we can do it with volunteers.

Safety and Security – Rev. Jason Workman

- The 2025 Calendar is out to the team for meetings.

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- Further discussions on upgrading lighting and installing cameras. Jason talked to OPPD and they might be able to up our wattage but it will increase the bill a little. A motion was made by Gary Peterson and seconded by Dot North and passed for Jason to have OPPD complete the work.

Music and Worship – Rev. Jason Workman

- The 2025 Calendar is out to the team for meetings.
- Currently working on TV monitor in narthex which is not working.
- Christmas Eve service will be at 6:00 p.m.
- Gary Peterson is helping with communion servers and ushers next year. Carol McCormick is helping with Children's Conversation next year.
- Children will be singing on Sunday, December 22.

Pastor/Staff Relations – Gary Peterson

- We have reached out to all staff members during the year. Our staff continue to perform their tasks well. We look forward to a blessed year in 2025.

Ministry Council:

- New Members Dinner is Sunday, November 24. Turkey will be provided. Terri Rich and Cindy Combs are in charge of décor, set up and take down.
- January Quarterly congregation meeting will be held on Sunday, January 19, 2025.
- December Council/Ministry preparations and homework:
 - ◊ Start planning your ministry's yearly goals and objectives: What is God calling us to accomplish in the next year?
 - ◊ Start preparing the Annual Report to be turned in to Denise prior to December's Ministry council meeting.

Treasurer's report – Doug Larsen

- Monthly Finance Report was given by Doug Larsen. The money that has been collected so far for Cabin 9 has been sent to camp Moses Merrill.
- Pledges so far for next year are \$128,580. We're still waiting on the bill for the last mowing of the season. We would like all ministries to have spending done in the first 2 weeks of December so Doug can have a financial report done for the December Ministry Council meeting.

Finance Ministry – Rev. Jason Workman (Interim)

- Becki Pike will be a Co-Treasurer as a support for Doug. Becki will also be a co-signer on the church account except for the Benevolent fund. A motion was made by Jason Workman and seconded by Gary Peterson. The motion passed.

Pastor – Rev. Steve Wamberg

- **New Structure and the Pastor Role** – Pastor had a handout for a new SHBC Leadership Structure. The council has decided to try out the new structure and will re-evaluate it in a few months to see how it is working. There are three new categories to lead ministries; **Growth** led by Rev. Jason Workman, **Care** led by Gary Peterson, and **Operations** led by Ron Reed.

Closing Prayer – Rev. Jason Workman

Next Meeting – December 16, 2024