

Dear South Fellowship Family,

As we approach the Advent season and Christmas, we, the elder board at South Fellowship, are acutely aware of the salvation offered to all by Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection. We are reminded of the fact that his death and resurrection are the reason that we, and every other Christian community in the world, gather as the hands and feet of Jesus to worship our God!

The degree to which God has blessed the community of South Fellowship is so evident to us that we want to share some of the ways we see God moving at South, for which we are so grateful to Him!

- Beautiful Baptism Sundays in May and November, during which 27 children and adults publicly declared their acceptance of Jesus as their Lord and Savior!
- A newly rejuvenated Men's Ministry with 75 men participating in the first quarterly Men's Roundtable.
- A new MOPS ministry where moms of young children gather to realize their potential as mothers, women, and leaders in relationship with Jesus.
- A beautiful and expanding Food Bank community that, each week, welcomes more than 135 families from 33 countries through the faithful service of over 70 volunteers.
- An ongoing faithful and healthy Celebrate Recovery community.
- A new training opportunity at "South Collective" attended by 120 volunteers.
- A thriving Kids Ministry experiencing growing numbers of children as new families engage in the South community.
- A new sense of togetherness and energy stemming from worshiping at one service and through "Summer Nights at South" gatherings.
- A congregation that has come together in grace and charity as the elder board explores the question of female eldership at South.
- The joy of sharing our resources with around 30 local and overseas partners.

As we near the end of 2023, we look forward to what God will bring in the new year, and we would like to invite you to join us in prayer and thanksgiving. We ask that you join us in praying that South might continue to develop as a community that is honoring to God, truly lives in a way that helps people to "live in the way of Jesus with the heart of Jesus," and that God would continue to bless South with financial provision.

In the last few months, you may recall Pastor Alex and others teaching and inviting us to share our time, talents, and treasures. South's income is about 15% less than our expenses, and as an elder board, we recognized that the time we've spent teaching and inviting in this space was limited.

South is blessed with financial reserves primarily due to a very generous, anonymous gift of \$2,000,000 given in December of 2021. We need to use \$200,000 of these reserves to help cover the budget deficits we have experienced this year. To date, we have shared just over \$200,000 of this gift with our local and overseas ministry partners and used approximately \$300,000 to address deferred maintenance and some facility upgrades (lobby carpet and Worship Center sound system).

As an elder board seeking to steward South's financial resources well, we desire to move toward a healthy balance of our operational expenses and giving and to be intentional about utilizing South's reserves. We hope this plan will allow us to dedicate the reserves to longer-term vision, special giving, and/or new ministry efforts instead of being used primarily for existing operational efforts and budgetary shortfalls.

As the board of elders at South, we invite you to join us in this commitment to ask God to provide. As you pray, please ask God to lead you as to how you can be part of His provision. We will be praying with you. If you sense God leading you to participate financially, we encourage you to consider increasing your regular (e.g., weekly/monthly) contributions. For one-time contributions, feel free to use the enclosed envelope. You may also participate online at southfellowship.org/give.

Finally, at South we never want giving to be driven by guilt but by an invitation to participate in what God is doing. The invitation to each of us is to give out of our gratitude, as transformed children of God.

The point is this: "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." -2 Cor. 9:5-7

Grace and Peace,

South Fellowship Elder Board



Bill Wizeman



Dan Elliott



David Shugert



Dusty Di Santo



Jimmy Jones



Jonathan (JD) Dunn



Mike Galuzzi



Steve Schroeder