

2023

Annual Donor Gratitude Report



THE UPPER ROOM®



The Upper Room invites people
to create daily life with God.

From the Executive Director

Greetings from Nashville, Tennessee, on this beautiful day. I'm writing this introduction to our Annual Donor Report during the season of Lent. Like many of us, I took on a Lenten challenge, a daily prayer practice to help me grow spiritually this spring.

I'm reading through the Gospel of John, one chapter a day. What I have gained in the reading is a strong awareness of God's generosity in every chapter. The perennial favorite John 3:15 says, "For God so loved the world, he gave his one and only Son so that we might have eternal life." And in John 1, Jesus is described as the true light that *gives* light to everyone.

I also see this same pattern of abundance and generosity in Jesus' actions. In the early chapters, Jesus performs his first miracle by turning jugs of water into wine for the wedding guests, he offers living water to a Samaritan woman, he heals the sick and the blind, and he feeds a crowd of 5,000 with a mere five loaves and two small fish — with food leftover. Abundance.

Jesus says, "I am bread so you will never go hungry," and "I am light so you will never walk in darkness." And today, I read "I am the good shepherd who will lay down my life for the sheep."

What comes to mind as I'm reading John's gospel is that God is a giver of good gifts. God operates out of abundance, and God invites us to participate in these acts

of generosity. It was the servants who filled the jugs, it was the Samaritan woman who drew the "living" water, it was the boy who gave up his lunch of fish and loaves.

This makes me curious, so I must ask, what prompts your generosity, especially toward The Upper Room? Please let us know at development@UpperRoom.org. We are so blessed by your deep kindness and spirit of gratitude. It is donors like you, who encourage and sustain us, who undergird our ministries. You are the bright reflection of God's presence and generosity in the world. Thank you.

The Upper Room had much to be grateful for in 2023, including a significant increase in donation revenue due to your incredible generosity. We celebrated milestone anniversaries for The Upper Room Chapel (70th), Emmaus Ministries (45th), The Academy for Spiritual Formation (40th), and the Spanish version of *The Upper Room, El Aposento Alto* (85 years). We continued the publication of *The Upper Room* daily devotional guide in 34 languages by supporting our global publishing partners. And we made sure that hundreds of prison, VA hospital, and military chaplains received thousands of donor-sponsored copies of the devotional for their ministry.

Please take a minute to read through our donor report. It's a testament of your generosity. We give thanks for what God is doing in our midst through our work together.



Every generous gift of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.

—James 1:17 (NRSVUE)



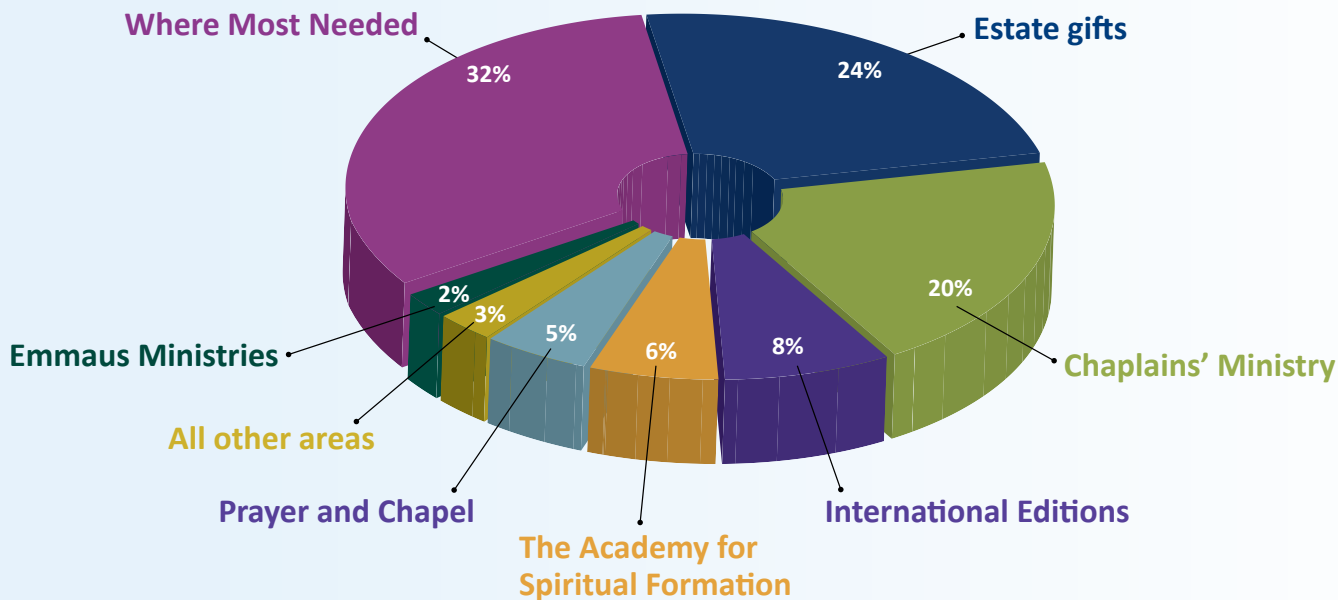
Sherry Elliott

Executive Director
of Administration,
Interpretation,
and Development,
The Upper Room



Donor Revenue for 2023

Total dollars raised in 2023: **\$1,319,693**



100%

of every donated dollar goes directly to supporting our ministries. The cost of our fund-raising efforts is covered by our administration budget.



Donor Revenue for 2023

Chaplains' Ministry: \$264,319

The Chaplains' Ministry Fund supports the distribution of *The Upper Room* daily devotional to military, VA hospital, and prison chaplains, enabling them to minister effectively to those they serve. This initiative, which started during World War II for military chaplains, has evolved into our largest ministry outreach. Over 245,000 copies of the devotional guide, both in English and Spanish, are distributed annually to chaplains.



THE UPPER ROOM CHAPLAINS' MINISTRY

“For many of our sailors, The Upper Room is less daunting than picking up the Bible for the first time. For others, it is a comfort to flip through the familiar pages of a booklet they remember picking up in a church lobby. Gratitude overflows for this ministry for being a constant, no matter the changes in time, place, or situation.”

— U.S. Navy Chaplain





Donor Revenue for 2023

International Editions of *The Upper Room*: \$109,762

The Upper Room daily devotional is available today in 34 languages and distributed in over [100 countries](#). Its production and distribution are a testament to the power of faith and community. This fund undergirds our international publishing efforts, supporting our dedicated publishing partners in translating, producing, and distributing the devotional in various languages. For many of our readers, finding devotional material in their native tongue is a challenge, making our devotional a cherished and invaluable resource.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, the Marathi edition (India) is relaunching in 2024. This revival speaks to the impact our donors play, enabling us to meet the spiritual needs of our brothers and sisters around the world, one language at a time.

The Upper Room daily devotional is available in these languages.

Armenian	English	Hindi	Italian	Marathi	Portuguese	Tagalog
Bulgarian	Estonian	Hungarian	Japanese	Nepali	Russian	Tamil
Burmese	French	Iban	Kannada	Norwegian	Sinhala	Telugu
(Myanmar)	Greek	Ilokano	Kiswahili	Odia	Spanish	Thai
Chinese	Gujarati	Indonesian	Korean	Polish	Swedish	Urdu

“Working with the international office of The Upper Room has been a huge blessing for us, allowing us to share The Upper Room Nepali daily devotional with hundreds of Nepali churches in Nepal and with Nepali congregations outside the country. The demand is there, and we want to publish even more copies. Hence, we ask you all to pray and encourage us in whatever way you are led in your heart to help us reach every people group and culture in Nepal.”

— Pastor Deepak Giri





Donor Revenue for 2023

The Academy for Spiritual Formation: \$73,069

The Academy for Spiritual Formation had much to celebrate in 2023. The year marked 40 years of ministry, and a commemorative service was held in May in The Upper Room Chapel. In January, the Two-Year Academy #42 launched in Alabama. With 76 participants, it's the largest Two-Year Academy in history. And The Academy's first-ever Civil Rights Pilgrimage, **The Long Road Towards Justice and Beloved Community**, took place in November. There were 34 participants who made the powerful journey from Nashville to Atlanta, Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma.

A total of 12 Five-Day and Three-Day Academies were held throughout the United States as well as in Russia, the United Kingdom, Puerto Rico, and South Korea. Of special note was an experimental Five-Day Academy in Tucson, Arizona, which included immersion experiences to explore immigration and border issues and how they relate to our faith.

The Academy continued to focus its fundraising endeavors on the operations budget and raised **\$51,615** for **The Academy General Fund**.

The Academy Scholarship Fund raised **\$20,019** to support participants who need assistance to attend an Academy event.

The **John Mogabgab Leadership Endowment** received **\$1,435** to support the recruitment and retainment of the best faculty possible. It serves as a permanent fund to generate annual returns to sustain the ministry.



The Academy
for spiritual formation®

“Participation in Academy #42 during this time of transition and new beginnings has been life-giving and stabilizing. I have been nurtured and held accountable for my health as a whole person in ways that have enabled me to minister to others who have also experienced the pain and disorientation of loss and change.”

— Rev. Carol S. Gullatt,
UMC clergy





Donor Revenue for 2023

Emmaus Ministries: \$33,257

In 2023, Emmaus Ministries celebrated its 45th anniversary. Since its inception, 1.5 million people, living in 40 countries, have been changed through an Emmaus event. We give all the glory to God. To help guide Emmaus Ministries into the next 45 years of ministry, an advisory board and a fund development committee were established.

Emmaus Ministries saw a steady increase of community events throughout the year, totaling **618** by year end. **Village Encounter**, a new offering in seven sessions, was launched in February.

Two major virtual events were held, the **International Virtual Gathering** and **Day Four Restore**, attracting 140 pilgrims. Sixty-seven delegates attended **Emmaus Ministries' Leadership Development Event** (LDE) in Malaysia, an event for leaders in Asia to network, to exchange best practices, and to grow in their understanding of the Emmaus offerings. Promising work continued in three emerging communities: Malaysia, Malawi, and Bolivia.

Fundraising initiatives focused on the **Fourth Day Fund**, the operations fund. **\$23,958** was raised in 2023. **The GIFT Fund**, which supports emerging communities and their regional representatives, raised **\$7,949**. The **Youth Ministry Fund** raised **\$1,350** for Chrysalis.

> Check out Emmaus Ministries' [the year-in-review video](#).



“The Walk to Emmaus has drawn people closer to God and transformed our churches and community as a whole for the past 31 years. We are excited to help other communities get started through The GIFT. Our hearts are full, knowing that we are not only working to change lives in our area but around the world.”

—The Rev. Dr. Thad Harvey, Aldersgate Chrysalis #23 (1993) Carolina community





Donor Revenue for 2023

Prayer and Chapel: \$60,396

In 2023, The Upper Chapel celebrated 70 years of ministry, serving in many ways as a place of prayer for our local and global communities. To commemorate this milestone anniversary, a special [prayer practices booklet](#) and [video](#) about the chapel were created along with an inspiring jazz vespers service, held in November.

Funds for Prayer and Chapel support the work of The Upper Room Chapel and our Prayer Ministry. Each year, we receive more than 90,000 prayer requests on our online Prayer Wall, a testament to the profound impact of this ministry.

“Prayer holds power. It draws us closer to the heart of God, it inspires us to Christian action, and it can truly transform the world.”

— Rev. Dr. Amy E. Steele, Executive Director of Program and Dean of The Upper Room Chapel



Donor Revenue for 2023

All Other Areas: \$40,959

The “All Other Areas” category includes funding for the **Crisis Impact Fund** and the **Stephen Bryant Prayer and Spiritual Formation Fund**, both of which were instrumental in creating and hosting the conference, **Resilience | Practicing Compassion in a World of Conflict**. The Upper Room and Africa Upper Room Ministries co-hosted this conference in September, which featured speakers from Ukraine, South Africa, Mexico, Namibia, and the United States. Nearly 200 people registered for the event.

This special category also includes funding for our **Web Ministries** and for accessible versions of *The Upper Room* daily devotional guide, including **Braille Ready Format (.brf) Files**.

Where Most Needed: \$421,120

Donations designated as “Where Most Needed” are made available for Upper Room ministries that need additional funding to accomplish their ministry goals. Ministries that benefited from this fund because of 2023 generous giving include: *The Upper Room* braille digital edition, Prayer and Chapel ministries, and the international editions of *The Upper Room*. The Academy and Emmaus Ministries also benefited from undesignated funds as did Africa Upper Room Ministries.

“Nowadays, there is a lot of talk about resilience and how we respond to trauma. There is so much we face as humanity. It’s of interest to me to gain tools for myself and to help others deal with trauma in a spiritual way.”

— Thembi Mcinziba, Resilience participant





Donor Revenue for 2023

Three Legacy Gifts: **\$316,811**

Over the years, The Upper Room has been blessed by persons who have included The Upper Room in their wills. Naming The Upper Room as a beneficiary in your will is a significant way to invest in the future of this ministry. Many donors consider a bequest as a way to round out a lifetime of giving to The Upper Room.

In 2023, The Upper Room accepted legacy gifts from Marcia Reed from Georgia, the Harriet E. Hahn Trust from Minnesota, and the Wendy Allison Marr Trust from California. We give thanks for the life and legacy of Ms. Reed, Ms. Hahn, and Ms. Marr.

Would you like to include The Upper Room in your estate planning? Contact us at development@UpperRoom.org.

Your Impact in 2023

34 languages, in more than **100 countries**, reaching **4 million readers** globally.

1.7 million people visited The Upper Room website. **18.8 million** social media impressions.

75 ministry partners attended the **3rd Asia Upper Room Leadership Seminar** in Bangkok, Thailand.

4,530 copies were added to The Upper Room Chaplains' Ministry, which supports military, VA hospital, and prison chaplains.

12 in-person Academies (including Five-Day and Three-Day) were held throughout the United States as well as in Russia, the United Kingdom, Puerto Rico, and South Korea.

76 participants attended the Two-Year Academy #42, launched in 2023, making it the largest Two-Year Academy in history.

34 people attended The Academy's first Civil Rights Pilgrimage.

618 Emmaus Ministries events were held worldwide.

67 delegates, representing 10 communities, attended Emmaus Ministries' Leadership Development Event (LDE) held in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

More than **90,000** prayer requests were posted on The Upper Room Prayer Wall.

Four milestone
Anniversaries
were held for our ministries:

The Academy for
Spiritual Formation

Celebrating
40
years
The Academy
for Spiritual Formation

Emmaus
Ministries

45
YEARS
WALK TO
EMMAUS
THE UPPER ROOM

El Aposento Alto,
the Spanish edition
of *The Upper Room*

EL APOSENTO ALTO
85
AÑOS
ANIVERSARIO

The Upper Room
Chapel

CELEBRATING
70
YEARS
of THE UPPER
ROOM CHAPEL



Thank you for a great 2023!

Donors gave
\$1,319,693

94%

of all donations
were \$100 or less

340

donors are Fellowship Circle members, people who make a monthly contribution to The Upper Room. We send a special shout-out of appreciation to you!

Donors came from

27
countries

20%

of gifts were from
new donors

Total gifts from **9,006** donors.
Average gift: **\$73.39**
Average gift per donor: **\$146.51**

17,979



Join Us!

Ways to Become More Involved

Join the Fellowship Circle

The Fellowship Circle is a giving circle of friends, who make monthly contributions to The Upper Room. By selecting “recurring gift” on the donation form, you can set up an ongoing monthly gift of any amount and to any fund by using your bank account, credit card, or debit card. Contact The Upper Room development office for more details: fellowship@UpperRoom.org

Be a Legacy Giver

Planned giving or bequests make an impact for generations to come. For more information about including The Upper Room in your estate, please contact development@UpperRoom.org.

Give a Tribute Gift

Any gift may be made in honor of or in memory of a loved one. If you provide us with the contact information, a tribute card will be sent on your behalf.

Can Your Donation Be Matched?

Many companies match donations to The Upper Room when given by their employee. Please check with the Human Resources department at your employment to see if your company matches charitable contributions.

Make an In-kind Gift

If you are interested in donating an in-kind gift that is mission-aligned with our ministry, please contact us at development@UpperRoom.org.

Make a Gift of Stock

The Upper Room is able to receive your gift of stock via transfer to our Wespath account. For more information, please contact us at development@UpperRoom.org.

The Upper Room’s EIN# is 36-5019628.

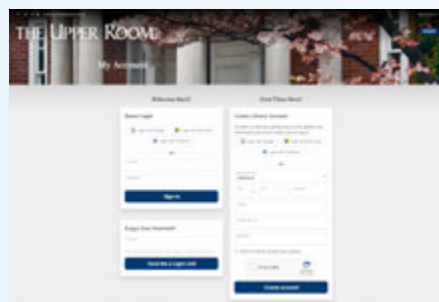
New Donor Portal

Register Today!

With our new online giving platform, GiveCloud, donors can now access their giving history, 24/7. In the donor portal, you can view your past gifts, update your monthly giving commitment, change your address, and more.

To get started as a new user:

1. Go to the-upper-room.givecloud.co/account/login.
2. Create a donor account by entering your name, email address (used for previous donations to The Upper Room), zip code, and password. Or log-in using your Google, Microsoft, or Facebook account.



For returning users:

3. Use your email address and password or the Google, Microsoft, or Facebook account that was used to previously sign in.
4. If you forgot your password from previous log-ins, enter your email address in the “Forgot Your Password?” field and a prompt will be emailed to you, allowing you to reset your donor portal password.

Please Note: Your donor email address must match what we have on file with your donor account. If you have any issues logging in, accessing your donor information, or matching your email address to your donor account, please contact us at development@UpperRoom.org.



Who We Are

Mission Statement

The Upper Room invites people to create daily life with God.

Vision

To foster an international community of people and congregations who are seeking God, building a vision of new life in Christ, nurturing one another by sharing experiences of God's love and guidance, and encouraging one another in Christian action to transform the world.

The Upper Room's Guiding Principles

- ▶ Honor God's presence that has shaped our past and guides our future.
- ▶ Create content that points to hope in Christ.
- ▶ Offer space to listen for the Spirit to form us.
- ▶ Embrace a spirit of abundance that gives witness to God's generosity.
- ▶ Engage the global community with love and respect.
- ▶ Commit to work that is relevant and accessible for all people.

Contact Us

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To learn more, please visit The Upper Room development website:
www.UpperRoom.org/donor

To make an online gift:
www.UpperRoom.org/gift