

Season of Prayer 2023

for Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education,
and Kingdom ADVANCE in South Carolina

Leader's Guide



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Scripture: “Then He told them: Go and preach the good news to everyone in the world.” (Mark 16:15 CEV)

Music:

- “People Need the Lord,” Baptist Hymnal, 2008, p. 359, Baptist Hymnal, 1991, p.182.
- “Grace, Love, and Fellowship,” Baptist Hymnal, p.661.
- “His Mercy is More,” Getty, Keith and Kristyn.
- “Here I Am to Worship,” Hillsong Worship.
- “In Christ Alone,” Getty, Keith and Kristyn and Allison Krauss.
- “The Goodness of God,” Believe for It. Winans, CeCe.
- “Does Anybody Hear Her,” Casting Crowns.

Children's Music:

- “He's Got the Whole World in His Hands,” Baptist Hymnal, 1991, p. 346.
- “My God is So Big,” Go Fish-My God-Great Music for Kids!

INTRODUCTION

South Carolina is known as a small state with a big heart. Our state is known for warm summers, cold winters, and moderate temperatures. The land stretches far and wide between the mountain peaks, rolling foothills, sloping Piedmont, marshy midlands, and sandy shores. South Carolinians are known for their love of sweet tea, cornbread, fried chicken, seafood, french fries, and barbeque. South Carolina Baptists are known as the historical Baptist pillars of the past, hospitable and charitable people of the present, and loving, gospel-giving people whose hands stretch toward the many opportunities of the future. With that description of our heritage and our character, aren't you excited to hear **What's Next** for South Carolina Baptists?

Whether you watch the sun rise and set over the expansive Atlantic Ocean, watch it drop behind the veil of the Blue Ridge Mountains, or watch it meld into the flat lands of corn, cotton, or peanuts in the Low Country, we as South Carolina Baptists are commissioned to see “that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.” (Isaiah 45:6 NIV).

The Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions was initiated and continues to be the greatest fuel for new mission strategies in South Carolina. In 1902, Janie Chapman was elected as the first president of South Carolina Woman's

Missionary UnionSM (SC WMUSM). Her heart for missions, strong personal discipline, and commitment to both learning from the past and launching into the future enabled her to give strong missions leadership throughout the state. The offering for state missions was first named in her honor in 1937 as the Mrs. J.D. Chapman Offering and the name was changed to the Janie Chapman OfferingSM in 1985. Today, over 2,100 churches affiliated with the South Carolina Baptist Convention (SCBC) cooperate in missions giving, missions discipleship, and missions support through the SCBC teams: Start, Strong, Share, Send, and Serve. Our South Carolina WMU leads in missions discipleship and enrichment throughout the state by continually equipping our churches to send workers out and to serve alongside our state, national, and international missionaries as they take the Gospel of Christ to people of all nations, tribes, and languages. Each summer at Camp La Vida, our children and youth get to know our missionaries and learn about their work.

Who will benefit from your missions giving this year? Climb aboard with me as we travel our state to see how your money impacts the life of one, who impacts the life of another, who impacts lives in a community, who impacts lives in our state, who impacts lives in our nation, and who impacts lives in a lost world to know Jesus and be transformed by Him. Can you imagine **What's Next in South Carolina?**

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ID DOWNTOWN SPARTANBURG?

A Life Transformed

Six years ago, Taylor Little was a young man filling his life with the world's pleasures yet feeling very empty. God already had a plan in place. As Taylor went to a flag football tournament in Cincinnati, he saw Ricky Wilson, whom he had not seen in three years. Ricky shared how Christ had changed his life and said, "Let's catch up sometime." As they talked, Taylor repented of his sin and confessed Jesus as Lord. Ricky reminded Taylor that his journey had only just begun and would require daily surrender. He also promised to meet with Taylor weekly to help him understand the good news of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. They still meet weekly, though they have both moved to South Carolina and serve as church planters.

Answering God's Call

When Ricky told Taylor he was moving to South Carolina to start a church, Taylor felt God was leading him to go with the one who was discipling him. He heard four sermons in one week which affirmed his direction. His own reading in the book of Ruth also reflected this calling as he saw an example of a young woman who had not grown up knowing how to follow God, but who chose to give her all for God and His people. When Taylor shared his desire to go with Ricky, Ricky said, "I was just waiting for you to tell me that you understood that direction from God, not from me." God had ignited a passion in Taylor that thrives today. As a result of Ricky teaching him about Christ, Taylor now invests in one-on-one relationships with others, making a difference in their lives as well.

Making Disciples Who Make Disciples

Ricky was one life transformed, made new, by the gospel. He taught Taylor how to walk with Jesus daily by his example and through Bible study and prayer. Ricky taught him to listen, learn, and lead through love, to find what he could relate to in people, and to start a Gospel conversation. Taylor learned to share his own story with others, leading them to seek Jesus and be transformed by the sacrifice of Christ. Taylor began training in a church planting residency program supported through the Janie Chapman Offering. After completing that assessment and training, Taylor, his wife, Destinie, and a few others from ID Clifton Church were sent out to plant ID Downtown Spartanburg.

"Then He told them" Go and preach the good news to everyone in the world." (Mark 16:15 CEV)

Multiplying the Ministry

With that core group and a few others, they launched public worship services for ID Downtown on October 23, 2022. The core group of 12-14 met to pray and study God's Word together and help build the identity of the new church. Three adults were baptized on opening day, two more were baptized the following Sunday, and two more were baptized by February 2023. The core group grew quickly and developed two small groups which included those new converts and others.

Making it Personal

ID Downtown is one of 23 new South Carolina Baptist Convention churches which receive monthly funding through the Janie Chapman Offering. The offering helps with the cost of promotional materials, portable event trailers, Bible study materials, and supplies for outreach activities in the community. Some of these activities include hosting movie nights on the grass, events at a local city park, and creating a regular presence at the downtown skate park. On one of his first visits to the skate park, a young fellow asked Taylor, "Are you with the city?" Taylor responded, "No, I am with the church." The young man continued, "The church never comes down here!" Taylor gave away five skateboards soon thereafter. His team distributed diapers and wipes another day. "You find what you can relate to and start a conversation," Taylor continued. "Then you just start sharing your story of how Jesus changed your life. Use your story. These people crave community." Taylor and other team members invite others for breakfast or lunch and share Bible stories, as well as their own stories of how they came to know Christ. Public worship services are now held weekly at 9:00 AM in the fellowship hall of another local church.

Your dollars make a difference when combined with the energies of these lives reaching one more life at a time for Christ. Janie Chapman Offering helps church planters like Taylor listen, learn, and lead others to Christ through relationships. They distribute popsicles, baby supplies, water, and snacks while engaging in conversations.

Prayer is the Key

ID Downtown is a relationship-oriented church. Their public gatherings display diversity and unity, blending multiple ethnicities. Taylor is now discipling others to continue the church planting multiplication process. One person changed by the gospel who disciples one more, who disciples one more, who disciples one more, and who shares the passion to create an environment for many others to come to faith in Christ. Many they meet are from broken homes and are hungry for a new way of life.

Taylor learned early in his walk with Christ that the first word of the day belongs to God. After his personal time with God daily, he heads out to a coffee shop to meet new people and start conversations. "We can't do anything without His counsel, His direction, His power," he says. "I pray before I open my Bible, before I begin with a pen to paper for a sermon. If we leave Him out, it becomes our own way, not His. I pray for wisdom and discernment. I seek to lead others not to look at what we don't have but to celebrate what we do have."

Initially, Ricky helped Taylor prepare sermons. Now Taylor goes through that preparation himself as he knows God and the people whom God has given him to shepherd. Ricky leads a group of young men called the Root Group. He teaches them how to study and interpret the Bible as well as preach it to others. Taylor shares how he prepares: "I read through the Bible book I am going to teach to the church first. Then I take time to see how to apply God's Word to our church. His Word will never change. I try to just teach His Word to the people."

Cooperating With and Multiplying Church Plants

"The gospel changed my life. Discipleship cultivated it. We teach others to go and do the same thing we are doing with them," Taylor says. "ID Downtown Church is the body of Christ as a community of disciples, making disciples, multiplying and replicating that, leading others to Christ, who will also send out our best leaders to build new church plants." Taylor is grateful for continued mentoring through Ricky and for other support systems and resources through Paul McKee, director of missions for Spartanburg County Network. Paul serves as an elder in the church which sent Taylor out to start another church. Paul believes in the new church. He believes in Taylor. Most of all, he believes in the power of God to do His work through new church plants.

Never Underestimate Your Reach

While Taylor believes that "churches plant churches, not conventions," he is grateful for the sacrifices and investments of South Carolina Baptists through the Janie Chapman Offering which allows him to fulfill the Great Commission. "Without those funds, it would be difficult to reach those who desperately need to hear the gospel. Through your sacrifice, you are

reaching the lost. Your support has allowed my wife and me to be loved and encouraged in knowing that others are standing with me, praying for us, wanting to see the kingdom filled through like-minded followers.”

PRAY FOR:

- The church to continue to share their story boldly so that the lost can be reconciled to Jesus.
- A permanent place to call their own to establish their identity as a church.
- Obedience to the call of multiplication in the next two years as they seek to send out others to plant another church.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR MINORITY COLLEGIATE MINISTER DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA?

To reach the nations and the neighborhoods for Christ, the Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) of South Carolina started its first-ever BCM group at Benedict College, a historically black college in Columbia, in the fall of 2022. The goals are to reach students for Christ, train them, connect them with a local church, and develop new minority college ministers.

“As a new work, it is hard work,” said Michael Pigg, Share Team leader for the South Carolina Baptist Convention. “People telling people. That’s how it works.”

Dr. Lesley Joseph, a Haitian campus minister, and his wife, JJ, met with ten students at Benedict College during their first week and averaged over forty in weekly attendance throughout the first semester. Seven professions of faith, mostly female, were recorded in that same semester. JJ built meaningful relationships with some of those young ladies by playing tennis with them. The Janie Chapman Offering provided Bibles, discipleship training materials, training retreats for student leaders, and food for weekly meals. The offering also allowed for many gospel conversations over coffee.

Chad Stillwell, BCM director for the South Carolina Baptist Convention, said, “We are very grateful for the Janie Chapman Offering and WMU. Without the Janie Chapman Offering, this ministry would have \$0 for ministry.”

PRAY FOR:

- Our South Carolina Baptist churches to be aware of the need for Christian minority Bible study leaders on college campuses and to be willing to seek them and invest in them.
- Development of mentoring relationships for minority collegiate ministers in other BCMs throughout the state.
- Revival on our college campuses, resulting in more minority students desiring biblical leadership and discipleship.

WHAT’S NEXT AS THE GOSPEL BRIDGES TWO CULTURES ON ONE ISLAND?

“Then He told them: Go and preach the good news to everyone in the world.” (Mark 16:15 CEV)

First Union African Baptist Church

Daufuskie Island, SC --- between Hilton Head, SC, and Savannah, GA

Do you want a picture of diversity, heritage, progression, unity, and vision? Meet one of South Carolina's most recently adopted cooperating Southern Baptist churches. Just drop in for a visit at the First Union African Baptist Church on Daufuskie Island on any Sunday and you will see some rich and famous people sitting in pews alongside those of Gullah heritage whose ancestors built the first and only church on the island. The island is only five miles long, and you can only access it by ferry, so it will require a little advanced planning!

A Blending of Cultures

Some of the island is still claimed by descendants of a group of freed slaves, called the Gullah people, who built the first church in 1881. A former pastor of the church, Rev. Clarence Edmondson traveled over and back by ferry each Sunday to preach for about 20 years. A portion of the island became an exclusive residential resort for the rich and famous with plush golf courses, while other portions of the island have remained mere dirt paths or roads less traveled. Therefore, it is a blend of the past and the present in culture and in worship.

A Hope and a Future

Aaron Crosby, a New England native, first responded to an ad for a job in 1994, not knowing that it was on Daufuskie Island, rather than on Hilton Head Island as he presumed. His misunderstanding was no accident! God had a plan, not only for his hope and his future but for the entire island! Aaron was introduced to Jesus through one of his earliest acquaintances on the island and met his future wife within his first month there. In 2005, Aaron and his young family made the island their home, with his dream of developing the island through construction. Aaron found that the Baptist pastor on the island preached solely from the Bible, and he loved it! He began to thirst for more. Since the elderly Rev. Edmondson did not live on the island, the church was deacon-led. Serving as a deacon, Aaron learned to minister with his heart to the surrounding people. Rev. Edmondson then enlisted Aaron to assist him in some teaching and preaching responsibilities. By 2015, Aaron became not only the first pastor to live on the island but also the first Caucasian pastor. One member said, "I am okay with Aaron being pastor because I know he loves me."

A Shelter in the Storm

In 2016, Aaron encouraged the people of the island to comply with the mandatory evacuation order from the Governor as Hurricane Matthew approached the islands and the mainland of South Carolina with great fury. He hesitantly left the island himself. As a trained volunteer fireman, he was among the first to get his boots on the ground after the storm. As Aaron worked with his chainsaw, an island resident approached him and said, "Pastor, you don't need to be doing this. We need you to check on others with a multitude of needs. Before the storm, you were the pastor of the church. Now, you are the pastor of the island." Aaron became the full-time pastor as a result of the storm, ministering to 550+ residents on the island.

Janie Chapman Offering Steps In

With no formal training for pastoral leadership, Aaron recognized his limitations and consulted with a local associational missionary who encouraged him to participate in the NextStep process for leadership development which is supported by the Janie Chapman Offering. With friendship and direction from a catalyst assigned to him, Aaron began to navigate the culturally sensitive issues challenging this historic congregation. In December 2022, the church celebrated its 141st anniversary, voted to accept the Baptist Faith & Message principles, and voted to become affiliated with the South Carolina Baptist Convention. The church has some unique challenges as well as opportunities as they recognize the changing faces and needs of the congregation and the island. As a NextStep participant, Aaron is grateful for the resources which helped train him and he is committed to leading his church to advance the Gospel to all residents on the island. As one of South Carolina's newest Southern Baptist churches, Aaron is grateful for continued support to reach the bridgeless island with the Gospel.

Preaching the Word, Loving the People

Aaron says, "One thing that connects us is the Bible. I am just faithful to the word of God. The residents have the capacity to reach others within their own status." Though the island only has about 550 residents year-round, they boast about 2,000 in the summer. Aaron's prayer is, "that God will use this island to bless His kingdom with a restorative element as He draws others to Him in this quiet, peaceful place."

Aaron was ordained and was driven to pursue additional studies in systematic theology on his own. He is a committed, continual student of God's Word, pastoral resources, and people. He leads a men's Bible study each Wednesday at noon. The church hosts a women's Bible study on Monday mornings. Sunday morning worship is not a black church or a white church; it is a New Testament church. They practice fellowship, share announcements, and pray together for their church and community as requests are shared. They read from the Psalms, sing from an older version of the Baptist Hymnal, and sing a spiritual in addition to hearing a bold, biblical message from Pastor Aaron. During the summer, the church also holds evening services to provide worship options for service industry workers. Spanish language songs are also woven into the services since Spanish is the heart language for many seasonal workers. Aaron leads in special seasonal studies, as well. For Easter, the church held a Lenten Series for six weeks following morning worship and lunch together.

Preserving Heritage While Casting a Vision

Although there are only a few natives still residing on the island, their ancestors helped build the church and they revere it. There are two faithful, sixth-generation Gullah women who attend the church. Of the nine church trustees, three of them are of Gullah heritage, and those three votes have veto power over any decisions regarding the church property. Many who now reside on the island have an attitude of self-sufficiency, with places like Haig Point operating their own private ferry service every hour, with access by invitation only. Yet Aaron knows that God's word is central to addressing people's needs and they have a unique identity as a New Testament church, not a country club. **What's Next** for this old church with a new vision as it has joined the South Carolina Baptist Convention?

"Open my eyes that I may contemplate wondrous things from Your instruction." (Psalm 119:18 CSB)

PRAY FOR:

- Those attending the church to grow in their desire to go deeper with the Lord and that two or three will grow hot with internal desire and depth.
- Outreach efforts to the island community to be effective in reaching people with the Gospel of Christ.
- God to use this island to bless His kingdom as a restorative element for many seeking peace and purpose.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH PALMETTO COLLECTIVE?

Where to Go, What to Do?

Many junior and senior college students think about what they will do after graduation, but how many ask, "Where is the most strategic place I can be after graduation for Jesus?" That question pounded in the hearts and minds of college students like Nathan, Claire, and Sara. What would lead a recently graduated, single male from South Carolina to move to the island of Madagascar thousands of miles away from his family and friends? How could Claire, a single, young female commit to move to Central Asia and function in a country where she does not know other people or the language? Why would Sara, a graphic design major, agree to move after college from the east coast to the west coast of the United States where she has no family, friends, or experience with the culture? The answer for these students and others is in the confidence and clarity of God's call for them to go to the most strategic place where Jesus can use them to reach people for His glory. They trust that Jesus is enough to sustain them amid all the uncertainties of their surrender and their obedience to their Lord.

Sara, Seasoned with Service

Sara's family traveled a lot when she was a child and a teen. Her Christmas gift was often a gift for travel in the coming year, sometimes nearby, and sometimes far away. As a result of multiple missions trips in her teen and college years, Sara's heart was driven to explore a greater missions investment after graduation. Following her freshman year of college, her desire to live her life on mission had been fueled and she just "wanted to do what the Bible tells us to do." She was confirmed for international service in the summer of 2020 and found herself quite confused when COVID canceled that trip and kept her at home instead. Reflecting on her prayers that summer, she said, "He changed my heart and taught me to be content in Him, whether I serve in America or abroad, just to rely on Him."

Janie Chapman Offering: Training & Transitions

With support from the Janie Chapman Offering, the Palmetto Collective (PC) was launched in the fall of 2020 to help students identify their purpose and where they can best serve Christ after graduation. Over 65 students have been trained as missional leaders in the past three years through this program. Sara Pepper, a 2022 Anderson University graduate, is one who is investing in a church plant as a volunteer in Pasadena, CA while being employed with a secular graphic design firm.

Sara devoted herself to working through discipleship studies with her Palmetto Collective mentor and met regularly with other like-minded college students as she prayed and explored where God might lead her following her graduation. Janie Chapman Offering funds help reduce expenses for these missions trips for college students in the PC program. These funds provide training weekends for students and a grant to assist with moving expenses for students who commit to a two-year

engagement with a specific Southern Baptist-sponsored work. These students serve in international countries, urban areas in the United States, or South Carolina with specifically targeted ministries. Sara committed her gifts, talents, and passions to the Lord and surrendered any preference about her location. She had no personal ties or connections to Los Angeles. She just said, “Here I am. Send me.”

The Palmetto Collective Family

The connections, sense of community, and leaders’ care for the students fuels their desire for missions even further and helps them explore greater possibilities. Sara felt called to pursue a secular career while serving faithfully in missions as well. The Palmetto Collective leaders encouraged her in that calling, though a greater percentage of students pursue full-time missions careers. She said, “We became like family, though we had never met before. We were training and serving with other like-minded persons. Our leaders and mentors wanted us to excel spiritually and in life.” Her training and experiences in the Palmetto Collective, funded by the Janie Chapman Offering, threw the doors wide open for her to explore, “Where is the most strategic place I can be after graduation for Jesus?”

Sara Surrenders to Serve

In her senior year of college, Sara prayed about where to go to be most effective for Christ’s Kingdom. She applied for positions worldwide, with her only concrete desire to be in a city. After her interview with a graphic design firm in Los Angeles, she felt great peace. Two days after the interview, an unfamiliar song by an artist unknown to her played on her music feed. It was “Ticket to L.A.” She then received a call for a second interview. Two days later again, she heard another song unknown to her called “Pasadena.” Her job offer was specifically in Pasadena! She moved in late August 2022 and her first Sunday there was also the first meeting for the Launch Team for Abiding Church, a new church with the North American Mission Board Send Network in Pasadena. Sara says that Abiding Church is an answer to specific prayers, and she is in awe that God led her there. The team reflects Acts 2:42.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42 CSB)

Sara has witnessed the Spirit of God as He has led her and others to be part of the Abiding Church Launch Team.

Sara, the Servant

Sara boldly shares her faith in her community and with co-workers. She assists with outreach events, sets up food, serves as a photographer, helps support a women’s Bible study, and does “anything else as needed.” Abiding Church is set to launch publicly in September 2023. A team of Palmetto Collective students served in Los Angeles in May 2023 to seek clarity for **What’s Next** after graduation. Your gifts to the Janie Chapman Offering help these students discover and engage not only in God’s will for their lives but also helps them guide others into a personal relationship with Jesus, making an eternal difference in their destinies! **What’s Next** for college juniors and seniors who are answering the question “Where is the most strategic place I can be after graduation for Jesus?”

PRAY FOR:

- The Abiding Church Launch Team to trust God and be bold, relying on God to change Los Angeles, not trusting themselves with that power. Pray for their hearts to reflect being with God and growing with Him rather than focusing on doing the work of the launch.
- Sara, as a single, young female, to steward her time well for the sake of God’s Kingdom.
- Pray for the 50 college students currently involved in the Palmetto Collective as they grow as leaders for Christ and as they discern where God is calling them to strategically be on mission.

WHAT'S NEXT IN RESETTLING REFUGEES IN SOUTH CAROLINA?

A Place of Refuge

Tim and Jody Cross lead Open Arms Refugee Ministry which focuses on the needs of refugees arriving through the State Department's Refugee Resettlement Program. It is concentrated near Clemson University where many internationals live and thrive. With a monthly stipend from the Janie Chapman Offering, as well as additional funds for training Southern Baptist Churches, they educate, mobilize, and train churches to effectively minister to newly arriving refugees by helping them assimilate and become self-sufficient. They can share Christ by being His hands and feet to those who are frightened and traumatized and are seeking hope, peace, and love. Tim and Jody invite others to help settle refugees by investing time and resources, as well as demonstrating the love and kindness of Jesus to a predominantly Muslim population.

“When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me.” (Matthew 25:35 CEV)

Circles of Welcome

Circles of Welcome set the stage for others to comfortably engage in refugee ministry as a group. A case worker is assigned to coordinate the services for the refugees, and through an app, volunteers for each refugee family can respond to meet the needs for which they feel comfortable. The team divides responsibilities based on their own interests such as 1) teaching them how to pay bills, 2) assisting them in scheduling medical appointments and getting added to their HIPPA form to help interpret medical information, 3) introducing them to grocery shopping in the state, 4) helping care for an infant or toddler while they train for a job, 5) providing transportation for necessary errands, 6) securing and furnishing a place for them to live, and much more. In late 2021, over 100 Afghans were brought to the Upstate region of our state as thousands fled for safety from their homes in Afghanistan.

Tim and Jody took a married couple and their twin daughters under their wings. Tim helped the man start a furniture-making business in his garage. The couple is attending weekly Bible studies and church with Tim and Jody. Their church used a grant from the Janie Chapman Offering to host a Thanksgiving meal for refugees as well as a Christmas celebration and meal. They were able to share about these holidays and what Jesus did for us by reading the Christmas story to many who have never heard the Good News!

PRAY FOR:

- Perseverance for those working with refugees seeking to learn functional English, especially regarding oral communicators who don't read or write.
- Comfort and continued trauma healing for refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine and the cultural challenges that lead to exhaustion and frustration.
- Open doors to share Jesus and how He taught us to pray.
- Refugees as they await medical and dental procedures, including prenatal care and baby delivery.
- More churches to step up to love our new neighbors through Circles of Welcome.
- Volunteers to help with ESL, transportation, and tutoring.
- A local storage solution for donated used furniture and household goods collected for newly arriving families.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SERVING INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS IN SOUTH CAROLINA?

Welcome to America!

In the 2021-2022 school year, nearly 1,200 international teachers from 40 countries were teaching in about 50% of school districts. They experience culture shock, language barriers, and limited resources. They arrive with two suitcases for all seasons and scarce funds to get settled. Some may also be in thousands of dollars of debt to the agency that

located the job for them. While many gather with family and friends or comfortably shop alone, these international teachers are longing for community and connections. Some may follow Jesus but fear not being accepted in an American church with barriers of culture and language. Many others do not know Jesus and will have no one to tell them about Him.

Janie Chapman Offering Impacts Schools in South Carolina

The Janie Chapman Offering helps provide training for Heart4Schools and grants for meeting needs. It also creates opportunities for fellowship and a sense of community for these teachers. Pastor Kenny Moore and three others from Davidson Street Baptist Church in Clinton attended training last fall and led the church to host a Household Drop-Off Shower for two international teachers in schools with which the church partners. The principal provided a list of items most needed. Their church also received a grant from the Janie Chapman Offering which allows them to host monthly free lunches, provide meals and snacks, and assist those in need. The church has embraced the heart of giving to meet the needs of the community as well. One of those teachers attended a Christmas celebration as her first visit to the church last year.

“Generosity will be rewarded: Give a cup of water, and you will receive a cup of water in return.”
(Proverbs 11:25 CEV).

Becoming Family

Several churches in Columbia create welcome baskets to distribute to international teachers as they arrive in country. The baskets include such things as paper goods, hand soap, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, kitchen and bath towels, a manual can opener, and a \$25 gift card. Some churches host housewarming parties (where teachers can choose home goods at no cost), monthly dinners, hiking trips, karaoke nights, international meal emphases, and other seasonal events.

Collins Cheruyot came from Kenya in 2022 to serve as a math teacher at Westwood High in Blythewood. In Collins’ words, the Columbia churches “offered a lot of support to us during orientation. To be specific, immense furniture and home supplies were accorded to us. They made sure that we fit well into the new home and moreover gave us social and emotional support during the transition. The church was also a vital place to find information regarding housing and some members of the churches in Columbia were hosting teachers in their homes. Most apartments require a credit history which all international teachers do not have. I would like to thank some church members who took it upon themselves and helped teachers find housing.”

Collins is already a believer and is now actively involved in a small group at Spring Valley Baptist Church (SVBC) because of attending an international event there. “The SVBC has become my home and I really love the place, members, and the community as a whole.” The members have continued to support the well-being of international teachers in many ways: spiritual growth, knowledge, social values, and emotional and moral support. He concluded, “I will forever be grateful to them.”

The Janie Chapman Offering has been instrumental in letting churches know of the needs of international teachers and the opportunities to minister to them. The offering has also provided financial resources to help churches meet needs and develop personal relationships along the way. What’s Next as South Carolina Baptists open their hearts not only for schools but also for the international teachers in them?

PRAY FOR:

- Churches in South Carolina to identify new international teachers in their schools and help them secure housing, as well as provide food, furniture, appropriate clothing for the climate, and other essentials as they get settled.
- Small group Bible studies throughout the state to adopt an international teacher in their community for a year and embrace them as family.
- Christ-centered conversations to develop as believers help provide transportation, home furnishings, meals, and fellowship opportunities for international teachers living in your city.

- Christians across the state to look for opportunities to engage in the lives of international teachers through everyday opportunities such as grocery shopping trips, dining out, recreational activities, and school events.
- Personal relationship opportunities to befriend an international teacher and share your story of how Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection gives new meaning to your life.

CONCLUSION

South Carolina was once thought of as a small state with lots of family ties. Now, God is bringing the nations to our doorstep, and we have the challenge and the opportunity to help people from many nations, tribes, and tongues settle and flourish in our state. As we enjoy our beautiful sunrises and sunsets from the mountains to the coast, as we demonstrate our hospitable nature of fellowship, as we celebrate our favorite Southern traditions and cuisines, may we see **What's Next** for those without Christ in our midst. We must continue to pray for their salvation, and extend ourselves into their lives "so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other." (Isaiah 45:6 NIV).