



SOUTH CAROLINA
BAPTIST CONVENTION

Advance Stories

2025 Ministry Plan

Cooperating for Gospel Advance

About a half million SCBaptists gather to worship in 2,000 cooperating Baptist churches across the Palmetto State every Sunday morning. They faithfully and sacrificially pool their tithes and offerings in joyful obedience to Christ to fund the Great Commission in their city, Association, state, and around the world. We are a united SCBaptist people on a laser-focused SCBaptist mission to reach our neighbors and the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; this effort and shared mission compels us to cooperate with a unity of purpose and consecration.

In the pages that follow, you will find stories of changed lives and Gospel advance, accomplished by God's grace through the efforts of your Convention staff and institutional Ministry Partners, all of which are funded by your church's sacrificial giving through the Cooperative Program. These are snapshots in time, representative of millions more lives across the state and the globe who have become spiritual beneficiaries of our partnership in the Gospel. Our prayer is that these stories inspire renewed confidence and sacrificial commitment for our forward work. The fields are white unto harvest. Let's work, and let's send workers, together.



Dr. Tony Wolfe
Executive Director-Treasurer
South Carolina Baptist Convention



each church every life

SCBaptists are a missional force for good. *Each Church* cooperates to love *Every Life*. We do this through mobilizing missionaries and developing leaders. Our SCBaptist team of missionaries exists to help each church advance the Great Commission together.

Strong churches turn outward. They serve their community, share hope with their neighbors, send missionaries around the world, and start new churches.

Our team creates environments to steward MOMENTS where leaders identify a direction God wants them to advance. We curate resources to help MAP their next move. Finally, we network leaders to help each other climb the MOUNTAIN before them.

We cooperate to transform each church's story as we impact every life.



Dr. Lee Clamp
*Associate Executive Director-Treasurer
South Carolina Baptist Convention*

***We value the potential of every life;
therefore, we don't give up on people.***

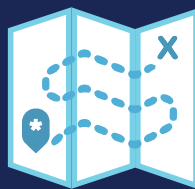
***We value the strength of collaboration;
therefore, we connect, share, and listen.***

***We value the energy of innovation;
therefore, we try new ideas.***

***We value the lever of leadership;
therefore, we network with leaders of leaders.***



MOMENT



MAP



MOUNTAIN



The Vital Role of the Cooperative Program

The Cooperative Program is vital for advancing the mission and ministry of SCBaptist churches. Through your continued giving, we can reach the lost, support missionaries, and fund Christian education as well as theological education that prepares future leaders. Your contributions make a profound impact locally, nationally, and globally. By uniting our resources,

we achieve so much more together than we ever could individually.

The Cooperative Program is our financial strategy to take the Gospel from the neighborhoods of South Carolina to the nations. Let's remain steadfast in our commitment to this cooperative effort, ensuring that the Gospel is proclaimed, lives are

transformed, and communities are strengthened. Your faithful giving is crucial in fulfilling the Great Commission. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication.

An SCBaptist Disaster Relief volunteer works to replace drywall on a house damaged by Tropical Storm Debby.

2025 Cooperative Program Investment



Our State 54.50% 14,442,500

South Carolina Baptist State Missions*	31.67%	8,392,550
Anderson University	5.22%	1,383,300
Charleston Southern University	4.78%	1,266,700
North Greenville University	4.11%	1,089,150
Connie Maxwell Children's Ministries	3.20%	848,000
South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging	3.16%	837,400
South Carolina Woman's Missionary Union	1.75%	463,750
The Baptist Courier	0.61%	161,650
Baptist Foundation of South Carolina	0.00%	-

Our Nation 20.34% 5,390,100

North American Mission Board - CP Allocation %	9.34%	2,475,100
Theological Seminaries - CP Allocation %	9.09%	2,408,850
Executive Committee & SBC Operating - CP Allocation %	1.23%	325,950
Ethics & Religious Liberty Committee - CP Allocation %	0.68%	180,200

Our World 25.16% 6,667,400

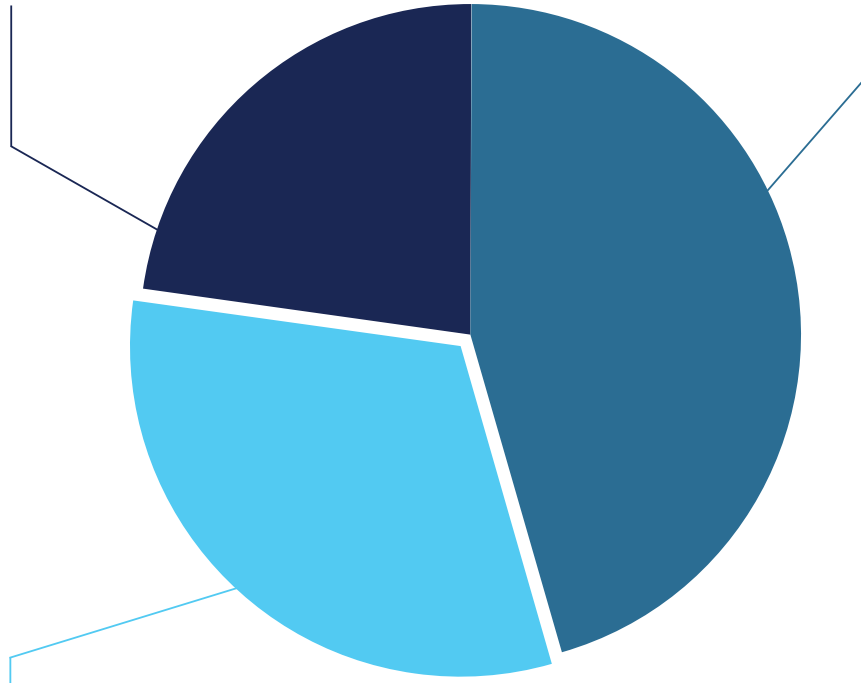
International Mission Board (IMB) - CP Allocation %	20.66%	5,474,900
IMB - Additional Investment from SCBaptist	4.50%	1,192,500

Grand Total* 100% 26,500,000

**Total SCBaptist Great Commission investment including Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, Janie Chapman State Offering, and other gifts and fees totals \$47.3 million.*

**SCBaptist
Ministry Partners**
22.83%

**National &
International
Missions**
45.50%



**SCBaptist
State Missions**
31.67%

Funding the Mission

An advancing Great Commission church is a strong church internally that serves communities, shares hope with neighbors, sends missionaries around the world, and starts new churches. Our total cooperative missions investment includes the Cooperative Program, special mission offerings, fees, and direct giving and can be categorized into six areas. The primary investment is sending missionaries, with a large portion of that investment being through the International Mission Board, which fully funds more than 3,500 missionaries around the world. We invest in serving communities through Connie Maxwell Children’s Ministries, South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging, and connecting churches with schools to serve. Our premier strategies

to share hope are through our Baptist Collegiate Ministries and church evangelism efforts. We invest in starting churches in South Carolina and through the North American Mission Board. Finally, church pastors, staff, and leaders are strengthened through Christian education and cohorts. Our investment in three universities, six seminaries, and ongoing training helps to strengthen church leaders of today and tomorrow.



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Shepherding Leaders

The Shepherd Team exists to help and equip pastors and leaders to lead their churches in fulfilling the Great Commission. Through tailored support and resources, we come alongside pastors to ensure they are thriving in their roles. Strengthening pastoral leadership paves the way for healthier churches that will impact communities, states, and the world for the Gospel.

BY THE NUMBERS

269

SCBaptist churches reported zero baptisms in 2023.

368

baptisms reported by churches in revitalization.

67%

of pastors say they need to devote time and attention to friendships with others or relationships with other pastors.

200+

SCBaptist pastors meet monthly in 16 NextStep Small Groups across the state.

New SCBaptist Team Established to Support Pastors



In January 2024, SCBaptist announced the formation of its newest ministry priority, the Shepherd Team. The Shepherd Team was created to focus on senior pastors primarily in the areas of leadership and church revitalization. Recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities that pastors face, the team aims to provide comprehensive support and resources tailored to various pastoral needs. The team's purpose is multifaceted, focusing on engaging young pastors, revitalizing churches, resourcing co-vocational pastors, mentoring pastoral leaders, supporting pastor and wife ministries, managing interim and church transition strategies, and more. By addressing these critical areas, the Shepherd Team seeks to strengthen the pastoral community, ensuring that pastors and leaders are well-equipped, supported, and connected.

As the new Shepherd Team Leader, Dr. Brian Saxon's extensive pastoral experience will guide the team in implementing strategies that promote growth, health, and sustainability within churches. Saxon

served on co-vocational and full-time pastoral staff at churches in Greenwood and Belton, SC before becoming the Senior Pastor of Second Baptist Church Lancaster in 2007. Under his leadership, the church has experienced a refreshing season of growth and health. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Clemson University, a Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry in Expository Preaching from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Brian has served on various committees and boards for the South Carolina Baptist Convention and local Associations through the years.



The newly formed Shepherd Team, led by Brian Saxon, exists to support, resource, and come alongside pastors.



Revitalization Through Pastoral Succession



After over thirty fruitful years at Glenrock Baptist Church, Pastor Gene Flack recognized the need for revitalization.

He shared that the Lord greatly blessed Glenrock Baptist Church during his service there. “We had a great time of worship and reaching people for Christ together,” Flack said.

Realizing it was time for him to retire, Flack felt the Lord calling him to search for a younger leader to come in. He reached out to York Baptist Association (YBA) who pointed Flack toward Pastor Dave Kiehn and the pastoral residency program at Park

Baptist Church, just 20 minutes down the road.

Kiehn recommended Alan Patrick, a graduate of Park Baptist’s residency program. The plan would be for Flack to train Patrick as the next pastor of Glenrock Baptist. “I was encouraged that he seemed to be a young man that was after God’s heart,” Flack said.

A Community Reinvigorated

Since Patrick arrived at Glenrock, the church has witnessed the beginnings of change. “We have really seen a new revival spirit since Pastor Alan has come here,” Flack said.

Patrick feels that the Lord has been kind to him and the congregation. “The Lord has already worked on me just to knit me so closely to this congregation.”

Flack, while stepping down, remains a supportive figure, ensuring a smooth transition to new leadership. His mentorship ensures a vital continuity of care and wisdom. “Our best days are not behind us, but they are in front of us always and that’s what we’re praying,” Patrick said.

Left: Pastor Alan Patrick recently became the full-time pastor of Glenrock Baptist Church.

Right: Gene Flack remains a supportive figure to Pastor Alan Patrick.

NextStep Encourages Community Outreach



Pastor Christopher Moss, a NextStep participant, led his church to connect and engage with their community as they rebranded their church.

In 2023, Pastor Moss guided his church through a metamorphosis in the aftermath of a church split. He participated in NextStep, a resource from the South Carolina Baptist Convention for ministers. NextStep connected Moss with a supportive group of pastors who were a source of encouragement, accountability, and hope.

Creating Something New

Moss dreamed of how to use his church's field. "We wanted the community to know we were still alive! We invited them to worship the Lord with us."

Gathering a Community

Thus, Harvest Fest was born. Harvest Fest was a concert event held at Cross Hill Fellowship Church in Westminster, SC. Local Christian artists played southern Gospel,

contemporary, or bluegrass while free hot dogs and funnel cakes were served. Over 150 people attended.

"Ultimately, we wanted to make much of the name of Jesus in our community. Our church has been through so much, but God brought us through — unified and spiritually sound," Moss celebrated.

Cross Hill's Harvest Fest brings in food trucks for its community gathering.

**ULTIMATELY, WE
WANTED TO MAKE MUCH
OF THE NAME OF JESUS
IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

- CHRISTOPHER MOSS





Churches Partnering Together for Hopeful Futures



Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Travelers Rest, SC, had been in serious decline and struggling to remain open.

Over three years, Mount Pleasant called Three Rivers Baptist Association for help, who pointed them to the need for a partner church to provide immediate resources for future ministry.

A Family Conversation

Michael Baker, pastor of Renfrew Baptist Church, heard the statistics on churches closing their doors. As he prayed for these churches, he also asked how Renfrew could leverage their strength as a newly revitalized congregation.

God began to unite Renfrew and Mount Pleasant together. James Nugent, SCBaptist Director of Church Strategies, said, "This partnership depicts a

beautiful way for our SCBaptist family of churches to leverage strengths as they work together."

A Replanter's Call

Both congregations were willing to make significant changes to restart a church in their community, including Renfrew sending their associate pastor, Josh Griffin, and other families to serve alongside him and provide financial support and other essential resources.

Griffin served at Renfrew for two years before being sent to Mount Pleasant as a replanter in 2021. God burdened Griffin's heart for struggling churches. The more he learned, the more he realized God was calling his family to this redeeming ministry at Mount Pleasant.

Mount Pleasant Baptist Church hosts Vacation Bible School.

Spreading Hope with SCBMA and Beyond



I CHOSE HOPE, BUT I DID NOT FEEL THAT I COULD RELISH IN THAT HOPE WITHOUT GIVING IT TO OTHERS WHO KNEW NO HOPE.

- MARGARET MCCRAY BROWN

Margaret McCray Brown's call to missions began as a young girl.

Disturbed by the idea that people might never learn about Jesus, she resolved to spread the Gospel. "That was the beginning of planting missions into my heart," Brown explained.

Life Turned Upside Down

As an adult, Brown lost much of her family within 11 months. Brown felt that she had choices to make since she no longer had the responsibility to care for her family as she once did. "I chose hope, but I did not feel that I could relish in that hope without giving it to others who knew no hope," she said. Brown spent the following summer in Kenya as a missionary.

Following the Lord in Missions

After spending years involved in women's ministries and serving on the board of the South Carolina Baptist Women's Missionary Union (SCWMU), Brown served as SCWMU president. As president, she continued to share a love of spreading the Gospel.

Although Brown admits she often planned her life differently, she believes the Lord directed her steps. Even in her retirement at South Carolina Baptist Ministry of Aging's (SCBMA) Martha Franks Retirement Community, her days are filled with fellowship and sharing her faith.

Brown enjoys time spent with an SCBMA Martha Franks employee.



Strengthening Churches

We believe in the power of unity and growth within our family of churches. With unwavering dedication, we diligently equip each church to cultivate vibrant disciple-making cultures within their walls. Our journey is guided by a vision that sees strong churches as the bedrock of our mission, enabling us to radiate the message of the Gospel throughout South Carolina.

BY THE NUMBERS

212

students attended a "Called to Ministry" breakout at SummerSalt.

2,500

activity bags packed at KidSalt for children in the foster care system in SC.

14,927

chicken tenders eaten by 7,016 SummerSalt, KidSalt, and Camp McCall campers this summer.

10%

of South Carolinians have special needs of accommodation to engage in worship.

Celebrating Camps



Camp McCall

Camp McCall is a summer camp experience for boys between first and twelfth grades that provides age-appropriate activities for campers, partners them with chaperones, and prepares them to have adventure, adversity, and accountability in their lives.

Attendance: 2,371

Salvations: 43

Repenting of Sin: 146

Expressing a Call to Ministry: 28



SummerSalt

SummerSalt is a high-energy summer youth camp that is designed to grasp and captivate the next generation with the Gospel.

Attendance: 3,509

Salvations: 124

Repenting of Sin: 228

Expressing a Call to Ministry: 149

Other Decisions: 73



KidSalt

KidSalt is an overnight camp that focuses on sharing the Gospel with third, fourth, and fifth graders. This high-energy, four-day camp gives kids the chance to experience the message of Jesus during worship, Bible study, track times, and recreation!

Attendance: 1,136

Salvations: 85

Repenting of Sin: 139

Expressing a Call to Ministry: 8

Other Decisions: 4



Camp La Vida

Camp La Vida is a mission discipleship and education camp owned and operated by South Carolina Woman's Missionary Union since 1983.

Attendance: 1,269

Salvations: 57

Pursuing Baptism: 19

Expressing a Call to Missions: 11

Participating Churches: 302



Worship Leaders Join Together in Cohort



Matt Freeman had been in ministry for years when he joined the South Carolina Baptist Convention as the Director of Worship & Music.

Freeman wanted to provide the same kind of support he had been given as a young leader. “I had a network of people I could ask for help or talk to about issues, new technology, and new techniques,” Freeman claimed. This inspiration led him to form the Worship and Music Cohort.

A Worshipper Finds Rest

Brian Hill hid his musical abilities for months when he joined Journey Church. “It was one of the first times I experienced a church that was relationship-first. They didn’t need something from me,” Hill shared.

An Unofficial Cohort Forms

Four years later, Hill became the Worship Director at Journey Church. “I wanted to gather worship leaders in the area,” Hill stated. “It’s not one church versus the other. We’re on the same mission with different methods.” Soon after, Hill met Freeman and learned of the Worship and Music Cohort, which he and the other leaders were happy to join.

“These worship leaders feel loved and cared for. They’re trained, equipped, and have their needs met,” Freeman added. “They’re raising the next generation of worship leaders.”

Hill leads worship at Journey Church.

Children Living “On Mission for Jesus” at KidSalt



WHEN KIDS
EXPERIENCE
MISSIONS, IT CAN
CHANGE THE
TRAJECTORY OF
HOW THEY LIVE
THEIR LIVES.

- KATHY MILES

In the U.S. a concerning number of young adults are stepping away from church. Kathy Miles wants to change this. Miles is the Associate Director of Preschool and Children's Ministries for the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

“Get Salty” is a hands-on, practical mission activity for campers on the last night of KidSalt, a summer camp for third through fifth-grade children. “We call the last night of camp ‘Get Salty’ because we want to be salt and light to the world,” Miles explained.

Reaching College Students

This year, campers packed 3,000 bags, which were given to Baptist Collegiate Ministry directors across South Carolina and handed out during colleges' welcome weeks. On each bag, a QR code could be scanned to learn more about Jesus and how to find and build a strong community during college.

Changing Statistics

Miles is familiar with criticism. “People will say, ‘Kids won't be able to do that.

Wait until they're older.’ When kids experience missions, it can change the trajectory of how they live their lives.”

KidSalt campers prepare cards for Citadel cadets.





SummerSalt Helping Student Pastors THRIVE

ONE OF THE BIGGEST THINGS I'VE LEARNED IN MINISTRY IS TO LEAVE YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR SO WE CAN ALL LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.

- BRANDON HARRISON

SummerSalt is a summer camp for sixth through twelfth grade students and is also one of the largest annual gatherings of student ministers in the Convention.

"We want to give student ministers a free opportunity to gather and train while they're at SummerSalt," shared Charlie Swain, Next Generation Mobilization Strategist for the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Creating an Opportunity

"Student ministers have the best ideas," Swain remarked. "So, we want them to get in a room together, ask really good questions, and sharpen each other."

Forming a Community

"One of the biggest things I've learned

in ministry is to leave your ego at the door so we can all learn from one another," added Brandon Harrison, student pastor at Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia, SC. "THRIVE allows people to help you think differently about what you're doing and what you could be missing."

"It's an excellent opportunity to evaluate our health," remarked Ben Feil, student pastor at First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg. "THRIVE helps me step back from the daily grind of ministry to see the state of my soul."

Left: Student leaders attend THRIVE training.

Right: Youth leaders work on ministry plans at THRIVE.

Providing Respite to Special Needs Families



Gateway Baptist Church recently held a Respite Night for families of children with special needs.

Planning and Execution

Led by Gateway's Hope Ministry Coordinator, Morgan Muir, the event provided a much-needed break for parents and a night of fun and care for their children. Muir, mother to a teenage son with autism, understood firsthand the need for such an event. "It was important to extend this service beyond our church to the wider community, letting them know we're here to walk alongside them," she said.

Muir emphasized the importance of preparation and personalization, gathering information on each child and sharing it with volunteers to ensure individualized care. Feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing gratitude for the opportunity to relax and recharge.

Caring for Special Needs Families

Muir encourages other churches to recognize the need for special needs ministries. "Even if you have one family, you have a reason to do this," she emphasized. She advised starting small, understanding the needs of families, and growing the program from there.

Muir highlighted the importance of the church seeing and supporting

special needs families as an integral part of the congregation. "We are not a separate entity," she said. "We are a core part of the church, and it's vital for the church to rally around these families."

A volunteer and a student put together a puzzle at Respite Night.



Serving Communities

Just as a family cares for its own, we fervently embrace the call to extend our reach beyond our church walls. Through our diverse ministries, we help our congregations to identify and address the needs of our neighborhoods as they seek to display love in action.

BY THE NUMBERS

52%

of public schools are being served by an SCBaptist church.

19

children have been adopted out of the foster care system by SCBaptist families.

212

Gospel conversations were had while serving 764 families from 7 states through Disaster Relief.

80,365

hungry individuals have received food from churches through the SC Hunger Relief Offering.

Enhancing Education Through Community Engagement



From April 2023 to April 2024, Heart4Schools and SCBaptists have experienced significant growth in both school partnerships and church participation. In April 2023, SCBaptists were partnered with 503 schools, a number that rose to 590 by April 2024. This increase of 87 schools represents a 17.3% growth over just one year, showing a continuing commitment to support through these partnerships. Similarly, church participation in the program has also seen a notable rise. In April 2023, 415 SCBaptist churches were involved in Heart4Schools, growing to 484 churches by April 2024.

These partnerships are not just about occasional visits; they involve consistent, meaningful engagement that addresses the needs of schools and creates nurturing environments for both students and staff. At the recent Heart4Schools Spring Celebration, several volunteers came to give testimony to the work taking place in local schools.

Strengthening Schools through Partnership

Shannon Brown from River Rock Community Church detailed how his church, although small, supports four schools in the Fort Mill area. From organizing coffee trucks for teachers to celebrating birthdays with gift bags, the church ensures its presence is felt and beneficial. The volunteers take time to listen and pray for the teachers, aided by the school allowing the church to put prayer request boxes in workrooms. “We’ve been able to pray with teachers who are going through all kinds of hardship,” Brown said.

Deborah Guest from Lakeview Baptist Church in Hartsville highlighted the adaptive nature of their support, tailoring their efforts to meet the expressed needs of school staff. This responsive approach has led to overseeing lunch periods to give teachers a break when they have meetings

during their planning periods.

Tommy Clark from Oak Grove Baptist Church shared about organizing a prayer walk through the schools, praying over every room. They also provided a teddy bear for each student in the school at Christmastime.

River Rock Community Church organizes breakfast for teachers and staff at a Fort Mill school.





Family Blessed by SCBaptist’s Adoption Grant



Kim and Matt had two older children on the brink of adulthood when they felt the Lord calling them to adoption.

The path to Chandler’s adoption was filled with challenges and uncertainties, yet Kim and her family remained hopeful. “We knew that he was supposed to be our baby,” Kim said, encouraged by the Lord’s timing.

Receiving SCBaptist’s Adoption Grant

Kim and Matt were the first recipients of SCBaptist’s Adoption Grant. The grant is made available through the local church to SCBaptists who are adopting children out of foster care in South Carolina, helping to reduce barriers as church members care for vulnerable children. Since making these grants available in 2023, five children have been adopted out of foster care by SCBaptists, and five more are awaiting the finalization of

their adoptions.

“Our prayer is that this will launch a movement of South Carolina Baptists into this worthy and pressing opportunity that is so close to the heart of God,” Tony Wolfe, SCBaptist Executive Director-Treasurer Tony Wolfe said.

Encouragement to Adopt

Kim and Matt are grateful to SCBaptists for their generous giving. “Please keep giving because, in a small way, this is encouraging others to be able to adopt or foster,” Kim said.

Kim encourages other families to follow the Lord’s calling to foster and adopt. “Adoption is such a picture of Christ and what he does for us,” she said.

Left: Matt Black holds Chandler.

Right: Matt and Kim Black and their family celebrate the official adoption of their son, Chandler.

**ADOPTION IS SUCH
A PICTURE OF
CHRIST AND WHAT
HE DOES FOR US.**

- KIM BLACK

Faith, Hope, and Forgiveness in Prison



At 43 years old, Charles has spent almost half of his life behind bars.

His journey through incarceration began when he was in his twenties. "You are just beginning adulthood at that stage. I grew up in prison," Charles said.

Receiving a Christmas Prisoner Packet

One of the most cherished moments in Charles' early years of incarceration was receiving his first Prisoner Packet. These packets contained valuable hygiene items like soap and toothpaste, envelopes, Christmas cards, and candy.

What stood out most to Charles that first time was the Christmas cards. "At that time my children were smaller, so to send them a card, they enjoyed that. I knew how much it meant to them," Charles said.

Christmas Behind Bars

Each year, Charles also looks forward to receiving the devotional written by SCBaptist staff in the packets. "The holidays are a depressing time of the year, and those devotionals, it encourages you. It builds you up," he said.

Charles' faith has played a central role in his life behind bars. He believes his relationship with God has been strengthened through his experience in prison. "Faith is everything in prison. If you don't have faith, you can lose hope. And if you lose hope, that can be a dark place."

Charles helps process Christmas Prisoner Packets at the annual collection day.





Pastors Form Bond Serving Poverty- Impacted Communities



In South Carolina, 14% of the population lives below the poverty line. In poverty-impacted communities, churches face unique challenges.

Pastors aim to meet spiritual and tangible needs; however, this can mean long, lonely hours, next-to-nothing paychecks, and a lack of trust from their transient community.

Seeking a Solution

Anthony “Ant” Frederick is the pastor of Midtown Fellowship’s Two Notch Church. He is also the founder of the Urban Pastor Cohort, which supports South Carolinian pastors serving poverty-impacted communities.

The cohort allows pastors to share ideas and encourage one another. “We feel a sense of

camaraderie,” shared Will Broadus, cohort member and pastor of Reconcile Community Church.

“The mental health issues, drugs, and addictions of our neighbors aren’t usually hidden. They’re right there on the front street,” added Jarrian “JayWill” Wilson, cohort member and pastor of City of Refuge Church. The cohort taught Wilson that lacking resources doesn’t mean he lacks opportunities. “Maybe we can’t start at the same scale as another church, but we can start something similar. That’s what this cohort helps you think through. You think, ‘Hey, we can do this. It’s been done before!’”

Left: Will Broadus talks with Kareem Goubran, pastor of Graffiti Church in NYC.

Right: Ant Frederick of Midtown Fellowship founded the Urban Pastor Cohort.

BCM Students Aid in Recovery After Hurricane Helene



In the wake of Hurricane Helene's destructive path through South Carolina, students from Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) at The Citadel and College of Charleston partnered with Disaster Relief to provide critical aid and support to impacted communities.

Nearly 100 students from the Charleston area joined Disaster Relief crews from SC and Alabama and the Aiken Baptist Association to assist in the relief efforts in Aiken. Citadel Cadet Jordan Willits said, "We're here helping out in any way we can, any way we know how."

Bronson Baker, the BCM Director for the Charleston area, shared how quickly plans came together after the storm. "When we saw the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene, we knew we had to help," Baker explained. First Baptist Church North Augusta offered space for the students to stay while working in the area.

Trained and Deployed

Students quickly rallied together, raising funds, gathering equipment, and volunteering their time, despite some being unable to return to their own homes. "These students didn't wait for a plan. They

were ready to jump in and serve wherever they were needed," said Baker.

The students received on-site training and immediately got to work clearing fallen trees, assisting with feeding stations, and unloading supplies from a cargo plane flown in with emergency provisions.

Finding Hope in Disaster

For Baker, the work of the students in partnership with SCBaptist DR highlights the strength of faith in the face of disaster. The Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina also supplied a food truck to feed the students and volunteers after a long day's work.

Baker also emphasized the passion he sees in the younger generation. "I see a desire to serve the Lord and take action. They didn't hesitate to say 'yes' to this opportunity to help.

Left: Associational Mission Strategist at Aiken Baptist Association Steve Simpson assists with unloading relief supplies sent by cargo plane.

Right: Students from The Citadel serve with SOBaptist Disaster Relief chainsaw crews to clear fallen trees.



Sharing Hope

Four out of five people in South Carolina are not regularly engaged in any Gospel-centered church. We help churches share hope found only in the Gospel. From large evangelistic gatherings to small-group environments to relational evangelism with friends, we are resolute in our commitment to make disciples who, in turn, make disciples.

BY THE NUMBERS

10,433

total baptisms in SCBaptist churches,
a 30% increase this year.

20,094

students engaged on college campuses
across SC by Baptist Collegiate Ministries.

5,781

students heard the Gospel and made
526 professions of faith at nine ONE
Night events.

726

college students served on BCMGO mission
trips in seven locations around the world.

Serving International Students in Columbia



Each year, the University of South Carolina welcomes approximately 1,700 international students and scholars from over 70 countries. These students represent diverse cultures, languages, and religious beliefs. Recently, USC's Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) organized a day trip to Charleston with 55 international students.

Exploring Charleston

"This excursion provided a unique opportunity to explore the cultural and religious heritage of Charleston while facilitating the sharing of both culture and the Gospel," Collegiate Minister Adam Venters said.

One highlight of the trip was the tour of First Baptist Church of Charleston, where Marshall Blalock shared the story of Jesus and the impact of the Gospel in anticipation of Easter services.

Forging Connections

Venters shared that there were many great Gospel conversations on the ride to and from Charleston. "Something about sitting next to each other and exploring together provides an openness to talk more than just small talk," Venters said.

One of the results of the trip was the relationships and connections made. Events like the day trip to Charleston help to be a catalyst for building trust and relationships with international students that go far beyond one day. "This is a great way for church staff and church members to serve internationals in our city," Venters said.

Students visit popular Charleston landmarks.



Churches Leading Students to Christ at ONE Night



Throughout February 2024, over 2,250 students from across the state gathered for ONE Night.

ONE Night is an evening of boldly sharing the hope of the Gospel with middle and high schoolers. In total, students from 77 churches took part in one of three ONE Night events near them in Spartanburg, Laurens, or Myrtle Beach.

Sharing Truth

At the event in Spartanburg, speaker Shane Pruitt reminded students of who the Lord made them to be, their purpose, and their need for Jesus. Pruitt is the National Next Generation Director at the North American Mission Board.

After high-energy worship, speakers presented the Gospel, and students were given time to respond. In all, 280 students responded to the Gospel,

with others responding to calls to repentance, ministry, and missions.

Cooperation at Work

“This is South Carolina Baptist cooperation at work,” SCBaptist Executive Director-Treasurer Tony Wolfe said. This past year, 4,806 students heard the Gospel at a ONE Night event, and 418 accepted Christ. “This is possible because there are half a million SCBaptists across the state who are pooling their resources through the Cooperative Program because they believe in it.”

Students enjoy games and food before ONE Night begins.





A Student's Collegiate Journey with SCBaptist



Growing up in an SCBaptist church and later attending Charleston Southern University (CSU), Elise Bright's path was deeply intertwined with the SCBaptist community. During her college years, she took part in both the Catalyst program and Palmetto Collective at SCBaptist.

Bridging Creativity and Ministry

Bright's involvement on the Creative Team through the Catalyst program offered her an opportunity to merge her creative skills in a ministry context, including hands-on experience in photography and social media. "Being a Catalyst made me desire to grow in my work ethic and commitment to excellence so that I honor the Lord in my personal and work life," Bright said.

Palmetto Collective (PC) was another significant chapter in Bright's journey, offering her a broader

perspective on ministry. "PC was eye-opening in learning all of the various facets of missions and ministry," she said. The program provided her with invaluable insights from seasoned ministry leaders and missionaries. "As I moved into post-grad, I felt as though I had clarity of where I was most useful to the Kingdom.

Bright serves on a mission trip to Japan with Palmetto Collective.



Fellowship and Renewal at San Diego Retreat for Pastors' Wives



SCBaptist's Women's Ministry, in partnership with the North American Mission Board, recently held a retreat in San Diego, aiming to offer minister's wives a space for fellowship, spiritual growth, and renewal.

The retreat aimed to serve those who tirelessly serve others in their church communities in San Diego, gathering women from both South Carolina and San Diego.

Providing Encouragement

Allison Powell was excited about the retreat because she understands the challenges pastors' wives go through. "It's a lonely place to be sometimes because you don't always feel like you can talk about what you're going through," Powell shared.

"In South Carolina, we are blessed to have an abundance of Southern Baptist churches that are

right in our areas," Sarah Rogers said. She shared that the same cannot be said of the spiritual landscape in San Diego, emphasizing the importance of supporting the church planters and their families.

Finding Rest

The retreat united women from diverse backgrounds, including those newly involved in church plants and those with years of experience, and included worship in both Spanish and English.

The retreat also served as a reminder of the broader community and support network that spans the nation. As the women return to their respective ministries, they carry with them the renewed strength, friendships, and lessons learned from this gathering.

Pastors' wives find encouragement and fellowship at the retreat.

Answering the Call to Missions at CONVERGE



IT FELT SO GOOD
TO SAY THAT I WAS
FULLY PUTTING MY
TRUST IN THE LORD.

- NORA RYAN

Nora Ryan never anticipated how a weekend retreat like CONVERGE could change the course of her life.

Seeking friendship among fellow Christians at Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) during her freshman year, Ryan discovered much more. “BCM has not only helped grow my relationship with the Lord immensely but has also given me a home away from home,” Ryan said.

A New Willingness

CONVERGE, an annual conference that challenges and equips college students to passionately follow Jesus, became a pivotal moment for Ryan. Throughout the weekend, she grappled with the idea of missions. “This was not the first time the Lord put the idea of missions on my heart, but this was the first time I was willing to listen to it,” she said.

That night, Ryan attended a prayer session for the nations. As she prayed, she experienced a sense of peace that confirmed her decision to pursue missions.

Moving in Obedience

In the days following CONVERGE, Ryan met with her campus minister and submitted her application to BCMGO. BCMGO helps mobilize college students for short and long-term mission trips. “It felt so good to say that I was fully putting my trust in the Lord in this next big chapter of my life,” she said.

Ryan attends her second CONVERGE conference.



Sending Missionaries

As SCBaptists, we are united by a singular purpose: to spread the light of the Gospel to every corner of the world. We call for churches to become beacons of hope in their neighborhoods, states, and continents alike. Following God's leading, we develop and send future missionaries and provide pathways for them to live on mission locally and globally.

BY THE NUMBERS

271,280

foreign-born people live in SC.

4.6B

individuals are considered unreached with the Gospel.

12

Palmetto Collective graduates served as IMB Journeymen in the last four years.

193

SCBaptist pastors and leaders participated in SCGo Vision Trips this year.

Forming Partnerships in Japan



Tokyo, Japan, is the largest city in the world. Among its population of 37.1 million people, only 1% identify as Christian. In fact, the Japanese people are the second largest unreached people group on the planet.

Training Leaders

The Go Experience trip to Japan was designed by the International Mission Board (IMB) to immerse people in a country and a team of missionaries on the ground. Participants experience the culture, language, food, and sights of Japan and learn firsthand about the work missionaries do.

Our goal is to see churches form partnerships with IMB missionaries," shared Tim Rice, Mission Partnership Director for SCBaptist.

Reaching the Lost

In September 2023, South Carolinian pastors and leaders participated in the trip to Japan. Brian Spearman and Josh Adams returned passionate about helping IMB missionaries share the Gospel in Japan. Adams, a former art teacher, will soon publish a manga of the biblical story of Joseph, featuring the

honor-shame culture Japanese youth find familiar. Spearman and his church formed partnerships with two IMB missionaries in Japan and plan to return for a mission trip in 2025.

SCBaptists build relationships with local students.





From Vision Tour to Mission Trip in LA

GOD WORKED THROUGH
US AND IN US AND WE
ARE NOT THE SAME.

- SUPREETHI
TADAMATLA

After going to Los Angeles with SCBaptist for a Vision Tour in 2022, Jeremy Creech led a team of First Baptist Barnwell back to LA in 2024. The team stayed at Send Relief's Ministry Center, a ministry focused on alleviating poverty and preventing human trafficking.

Meeting Needs

Their mission extended into LA's most marginalized communities, including Skid Row and MacArthur Park. Through their efforts, they helped meet not only physical needs but also spiritual ones. They celebrated three salvations while in LA. The team also met up with Will Browning, who serves with the North American Mission Board, and with two church plants, The Abiding LA and Set Free Church. Supreethi Tadamatla

shared, "We thought that we were going to serve people, but actually God worked through us and in us and we are not the same."

Spreading the Gospel

As the team returned home, they were reminded that whether in Los Angeles or Barnwell, the mission remains the same—to share the love of Christ with a world in need.

As Creech said, "It's not about going to LA for this to happen. It can happen right here in our hometown."

Left: LA Church Planters serve with First Baptist Barnwell.

Right: The team from Barnwell learns about the needs of the area from local leaders.



Palmetto Collective Graduate Reaching Sub-Saharan Africa

WE CONNECT STUDENTS WITH A MENTOR AND OTHER MISSIONARIES. WE PREPARE THEM FOR FOREIGN LIVING AND MAKING DISCIPLES CROSS-CULTURALLY.

- ABBY BEATY

Abby Beaty is a young missionary living in Zambia but wasn't always sure of her calling.

Beaty was a college student when she felt called to international missions. Her Baptist Collegiate Ministry director encouraged her to apply to the Palmetto Collective.

Joining Palmetto Collective

"Palmetto Collective fine-tunes students' direction in missions," said Charlie Swain, Next Generation Mobilization Strategist for SCBaptist. "We connect students with a mentor and other missionaries. We prepare them for foreign living and making disciples cross-culturally."

Becoming a Journeyman

Beaty's involvement with Palmetto Collective led her to apply to become a Journeyman with the International Mission Board. This program is a fully-funded, two-year mission opportunity for young adults between 21 and 29.

Now, Beaty is on the field in Zambia. She leads church youth discipleship programs and raises leaders who will one day run those programs without her. She also teaches at the local school on Sunday nights, helps operate a safe house, mentors women and children in bush villages, hosts a women's Bible study, and even recently adopted a puppy.

Left: Beaty hosts a women's discipleship group at her home.

Right: Beaty spends time with local believers.





SC Pastors Partner in New England



SCBaptist pastors recently partnered with church planters in Boston, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island, for a Vision Trip.

“I really wanted to learn who the church planters are, the work that they’re doing, and what their needs are,” Pastor Jeromy Dean of Faith Baptist Church in Westminster said.

Meeting Church Planters

The team met SC native Joe Polson of Church at the Well in Everett. Since officially planting, the population has grown to around 40 people, and they have celebrated two baptisms, with others pursuing baptism soon.

“I firmly believe that we are here because of partnerships we’ve

received from Baptist churches in South Carolina,” Polson said. He expressed thanks to numerous other churches who have come alongside them and supported their mission.

Establishing Partnerships

In the short time he spent in the area, Dean was moved by the zeal of the church planters for spreading the Gospel. “Our church has really been praying through missions, looking for those opportunities,” Dean said. As they continue to seek the Lord’s will for their church in missions, he hopes a church in New England will be one of the ongoing partnerships.

Left: SCBaptists spend time learning about the area.

Right: SCBaptists pray together for church planters and for Gospel advance in New England.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT WE ARE HERE BECAUSE OF THE PARTNERSHIPS WE’VE RECEIVED FROM BAPTIST CHURCHES IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

-JOE POLSON

Camp McCall's Generational Legacy



Since Camp McCall began nearly 65 years ago, young men have been trained to become Christian leaders — as campers, counselors, and staff members.

Camp McCall is a summer camp for first through twelfth-grade boys. This summer, 2,371 campers participated at Camp McCall, with 217 making decisions for Christ. McCall staffers help run the camp and learn what it means to be influential leaders for Christ.

A Legacy Formed

This summer, over 25% of the staff at Camp McCall are the sons of former staff members. “Would you believe my son’s first camp counselor is the son of my first camp counselor?” Will King, former Camp McCall camper, asked.

Prepared for Ministry

Camp McCall had 12 legacy staff members this summer whose fathers had also been on staff. Four of those fathers are involved in full-time vocational ministry, including Brian Spearman, pastor of Marietta First Baptist Church.

Spearman attended Camp McCall nearly every summer and worked as a McCall counselor after graduating high school.

“Camp McCall built me in so many different ways. It just prepared me for life,” Spearman added. “Even in those small moments, doing devotions with the campers as an 18-year-old prepared me for a livelihood in ministry.”

Left: Former Camp McCall staffer Jeff “Shroder” Hensley volunteered at Lad Camp 1 with his son, current staffer Sam “O3zone” Hensley, while Will King and his son Hudson attended.

Right: Camp McCall staff have been serving for almost 65 years.



Starting Churches

As SCBaptists, we know that every church was once a new church and that each church has a role to play in starting new churches. We start churches because the local church is the body of Christ, extending the love of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every community in South Carolina. We are not merely observers but active participants in this Great Commission advance.

BY THE NUMBERS

151

new believers from SCBaptist-funded church plants.

50%

of new SCBaptist churches are ethnically diverse.

1M

new faces in SC over the last two decades.

7,084

people for every SCBaptist church along the coast.

Churches Planting Churches

Coastway Church was planted to address spiritual needs in a rapidly growing community. In June of 2021, a small group embarked on a mission with Jeremy Woods, lead pastor of Coastway Church, to plant a new church in the Myrtle Beach area.

“If the city of man is seeking to add infrastructure, we believe that the city of God must do the same,” Woods said. They identified Myrtle Beach as the fastest-growing city in the United States, with an influx of 50 people daily. “You could plant one new church every single week and not come close to keeping up with the historic population boom,” Woods said.

Outreach at Coastal Carolina

The team aimed to foster a multi-generational focus, particularly toward college students attending Coastal Carolina University (CCU). With roughly 11,000 students, CCU represented a ripe mission field. “We are thrilled and thankful to be able to bring the Gospel to a place and a campus like CCU,” Woods said.

After hearing about Coastway on campus, Makayla Buckner decided to visit. “After coming to Coastway, I truly felt that I was ready to publicly declare that Jesus is my Savior,” Buckner said. Kaleb Ranhorn, another CCU student, shared that he believes the Lord used Coastway to seek him out. “Coastway just provided a place for me to feel so welcomed and loved,” he said.

Makayla Buckner joins in worship at Coastway Church.

AFTER COMING TO COASTWAY, I TRULY FELT THAT I WAS READY TO PUBLICLY DECLARE THAT JESUS IS MY SAVIOR.

-MAKAYLA BUCKNER





Church Planting in Myrtle Beach's Wave of Growth



With Myrtle Beach being the fastest-growing city in the country, church planting efforts in the Grand Strand are a top priority for the Start Team. Currently, there are four funded SCBaptist church plants in the region.

With an average of 50 people moving daily to the area, "The Grand Strand is the most significant area in the Palmetto State for our churches to reach every life," Tom Gore, SCBaptist Church Planting Strategist, said.

Challenges and Opportunities

Jeff Gaskins, Associational Mission Strategist at the Waccamaw Baptist Association (WBA), explained that the 78 churches in the WBA contain about 19,000 church members. "The equivalent of the entire membership of our Association moved here in one year, and that's just increasing," Gaskins said.

The area presents some challenges for church planters. Many transplants come from the Northeast, often bringing a completely unchurched background. Jordan Gandy, pastor of Coastal Life Community

Church, recently baptized an 84-year-old man and his 80-year-old wife. "That's unheard of for many churches, but they had a fresh hunger for the truth because they had never heard it," Gandy said.

Intentional Approach to Planting

The Start Team and the WBA are united in reaching the lost in the Grand Strand. "We need existing churches to be healthy and growing, and we need to plant churches to keep pace with the growth," Gaskins said.

"We prayed that God would send more folks to our churches, and God answered!" Gore said. For the Start Team, strategic partnerships with churches outside of the area will be vital for the future trajectory of church planting in Myrtle Beach.

Coastal Life Community Church baptizes 10 believers.

A Replanted Church in Woodfield Park



After years of prayer and preparation, New Creation Baptist Church launched in January 2024 in the former facilities of Woodfield Park Baptist Church.

"I'd never been to Woodfield Park Baptist before," stated Ed Stewart, pastor of New Creation Baptist Church. "But at a meeting in their fellowship hall, the seeds were planted to lead a church plant."

Building Connections

Originally built as off-campus housing for Fort Jackson, the Woodfield Park community contains a diverse racial and ethnic immigrant community — many below the poverty line. "Our vision is to be out in the neighborhood, make connections, meet needs, build relationships, and share the transforming power of Jesus," emphasized Stewart.

Prayer for the Future

New Creation Baptist Church seeks to become a refuge. "This community appears to have a desperation," stated Daisy Rodriguez, who joined the core team with her husband, John. "The prayer is to give people a hope."

"I'm thankful for a genuine community that rejoices and grieves together," shared Maddie Dean, a core team member. "I look forward to seeing this church impact the neighborhood for generations."

Pastor Ed Stewart prays over New Creation Baptist Church.





Two Congregations Plant New Church



South Carolina is growing fast, and churches in these new neighborhoods are crucial.

In 2015, when Joe Douglas joined Restoration Community Church's staff, Pastor Adam Spurlock immediately sensed a pastoral calling.

Identifying God's Call

In 2021, God gave Douglas a vision for planting another healthy church. "I told Adam, and he said, 'I knew; I was just waiting on you!'" Douglas laughed.

In 2022, Douglas began a residency with the Church at Cane Bay, five minutes from where the new church would be. Two staff members from Restoration joined his team at the Church of Cane Bay to prepare for the new church.

Weathering the Unexpected

Kingdom Church was meant to launch in 2023, but Douglas received deployment orders from the National Guard. Instead of pausing, they pressed forward.

Douglas met virtually with his team every week. In his absence, they took responsibility. When he returned, everyone was ready to hit the ground running.

Kingdom Church officially launched in January 2024. "It's overwhelming when you see the faithfulness of God's people to God's mission," Douglas recounted emotionally.

Pastor Joe Douglas of Kingdom Church welcomes people on a Sunday morning.

Churches Planting Churches in the Lowcountry



The Lowcountry of South Carolina, known for its picturesque landscapes and historic cities, is also one of the least churched areas in the state.

Under the guidance of Lead Pastor Brett Myers, First Baptist Church Hilton Head Island is on a mission to address the spiritual need in the area. The church was instrumental in sending out Pastor Bobby Thompson with City Hope Church in Okatie, SC, and will send out Geoff Lawson to establish Grace Bible Church in Bluffton.

Investing in Future Planters

The church not only provides support to its planters but also offers a residency program that prepares them for their mission. Currently a resident at First Baptist, Geoff Lawson will be sent out to plant in the fall of 2024. The residency program offers him the opportunity to spend time with leadership, learning, and growing in his calling.

Aside from equipping the residents, the program also helps the church.

Myers also hopes that the Lord may begin to call members of the congregation to consider being part of a church planting team. “We pray that more churches in the future will be called out from our team here at the church,” Myers said.

Pastor Bobby Thompson planted City Hope Church in 2022.



One Family

South Carolina Baptists are one family on one mission through one cooperative effort. We believe the next iteration of a mighty movement of God through SCBaptists will come as we lock arms more strategically between the Convention, Associations, and Ministry Partners. We prioritize collaboration and unity toward our shared mission of reaching South Carolinians with the Gospel by discipling, educating, and mobilizing them to reach their neighbors and the nations for Christ.

BY THE NUMBERS

3,579

fully funded missionaries through the International Mission Board.

230

vulnerable children and families served at Connie Maxwell Children's Ministries.

340

senior adults being ministered to through South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging.

10,790

students enrolled across our three colleges.



SCWMU Prioritizes Mental Health Initiative



The South Carolina Woman's Missionary Union (SCWMU) has embraced the national WMU initiative to prioritize mental health through Project HELP: Mental Health. "In our everyday lives, we encounter individuals that are grappling with mental health challenges," Hannah Smith, adult consultant at SCWMU, said.

Providing Training Opportunities

One of their key efforts was a Mental Health First Aid Training held in May in Columbia. "A mental health first aid training can equip you with the tools to identify, understand, and respond effectively to signs of mental health and substance use challenges in adults," Smith said.

Engaging with Compassion

Twenty participants from across South Carolina attended the 8-hour certification course, gaining practical skills to support those facing mental health challenges. "We hope that emphasizing mental

health awareness will help churches become a safe space for those experiencing mental health challenges," Smith said. The training was offered free of charge, allowing attendees to focus fully on learning and preparing to lead mental health initiatives in their own churches and communities.

"More so than any other group of people, Christians should be able to compassionately engage with those who are struggling with mental illness," Smith said. "Our desire is for SCBaptists to feel more equipped to minister to those around them who may be struggling."

Twenty attendees took part in the mental health certification course provided by SCWMU.



Shaping a Future in Ministry

I JUST GOT PRACTICAL STEPS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO DO MINISTRY, AND I'VE NEVER LOOKED BACK.

- JONAH SIMS

A Greenwood, SC, native, Jonah Sims' call to ministry began as a student at SummerSalt. "I was 13 years old, and I had just met Jesus the year before, and there was a very clear call to ministry that the Holy Spirit set on my heart," he said.

A Biblical Foundation

As he continued to seek clarity about his calling, he decided to attend Anderson University (AU), where he pursued a major in Christian Studies. "I just got practical steps and opportunities to do ministry, and I've never looked back," Sims said.

At AU, Sims found an environment where faith and education were seamlessly integrated. "The staff that works at Anderson all call on the name of Jesus, and all agree on a shared statement of faith," Sims said. He shared that this led to an emphasis on adhering to Scripture and seeking to bring glory to the Lord in their studies.

Practical Training in Ministry

While at AU, Sims also served for three summers at SummerSalt and KidSalt, held on the campus of Charleston Southern University. "I met the Lord at SummerSalt, answered a call to ministry at SummerSalt, and now the Lord continues to use this ministry as a key part in my life," Sims said.

Sims' experiences through Anderson University and SummerSalt have instilled in him a deep sense of gratitude for the cooperative efforts that make such opportunities possible. As he looks toward his future in ministry, he remains thankful for the solid foundation laid by his education and practical experiences.

Sims takes part in a student night at Anderson University's BCM.

Fostering Collaboration and Vision in Christian Education



SCBaptist's three Christian universities provide a biblical worldview that prepares students for careers in ministry.

SCBaptist is proud to be ministry partners with Anderson University, Charleston Southern University, and North Greenville University to mold a new generation grounded in Christian principles.

Academic and Spiritual Journeys

Each university brings a unique blend of academic rigor and spiritual depth, preparing students for both professional success and personal faith development. "We help them in the efforts of mobilization for those who are saved to be sent," Dr. Jeff Rankin from NGU said. "Students get a taste of what it looks like to be on mission."

This approach is echoed across the campuses, with a focus on creating environments where students can explore their faith in every discipline, ensuring a well-rounded education.

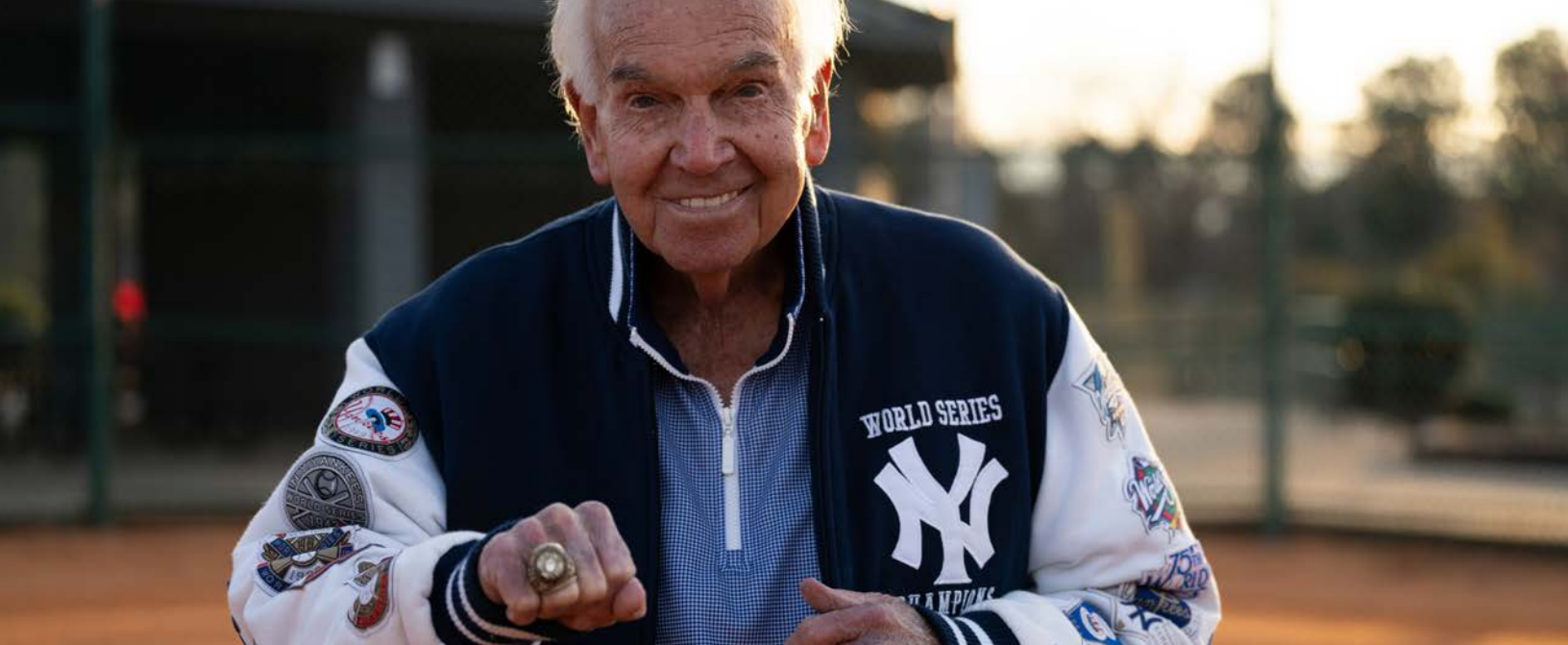
Nurturing the Call to Ministry

The universities also believe it is the collective responsibility of both educational institutions and the church to recognize and nurture the call to ministry among young believers. "We need to help people call out vocational pastors," Rankin said.

He highlighted the crucial role of mentorship in fostering the next generation of Christian leaders, emphasizing the importance of creating pathways for those called to serve in pastoral and missionary capacities.

Students leave a worship gathering at North Greenville's Turner Chapel.





Yankee Baseball Legend Uses Platform for the Gospel



Bobby Richardson came to know Christ at Grace Baptist Church in Sumter, SC. From 1955 to 1966, Richardson played second base for the Yankees.

God used his time in the major leagues to impact lives through baseball. Richardson competed in seven World Series, won three of them, and was an eight-time All-Star when he retired at 31.

Spreading the Gospel through Baseball

During his time with the Yankees, the Lord used Richardson in powerful ways. Many teammates, including the ball club owners, came to know Christ, and Bible studies were hosted in the locker room. “A Christian sports writer and I went and met with the Commissioner of Baseball,” Richardson recalled. “He gave us \$20,000 to start a baseball chapel. Now, every team in the major leagues has a baseball chapel.”

Influencing the Next Generation

Bobby Richardson leveraged his baseball platform to spread the Gospel. After retiring, he coached baseball for three universities, including the University of South Carolina and Coastal Carolina. He also became a well-known Christian speaker.

“[I’ve had] opportunities on the field and off the field because of baseball,” remembered Richardson fondly. “How lucky it has been for me to be a Yankee. To God be the glory.”

Richardson proudly displays a few memorabilia from his time with the Yankees.

Changing the Direction Toward Cooperation



For Bob Boone, giving to the Cooperative Program is essential to the health of a church. "I'm a big supporter of missions," he said. "Our Cooperative Program takes care of our missionaries and sees to it that they have what they need."

When Boone stepped up to the pulpit at Twin Cities Baptist Church in May of 2023, there were 10 individuals in attendance.

After receiving the church's financial statement, he noticed that the church had not been giving to the Cooperative Program for several years. "I started to compare giving with attendance, and I found that as the giving to missions went down, so did attendance," he said.

Giving in Hard Times

Boone also believes that giving shouldn't be limited to times of economic success. "Every church that I've served, anytime finance has started to get a little tight, I'd say we need to give more money to missions," he said. "Some people didn't think that made sense, but it works."

Boone feels that the Lord has been blessing their obedience. He's seen the attendance grow at Twin Cities since his first Sunday in the pulpit. "I'm glad to be serving this church. They love the Lord, and I think they want to do what's right," he said.

Bob Boone preaches at Twin Cities Baptist Church.

OUR COOPERATIVE
PROGRAM TAKES
CARE OF OUR
MISSIONARIES AND
SEES TO IT THAT
THEY HAVE WHAT
THEY NEED.

- BOB BOONE





Sharing God's Love Through Cooking



Anyone is welcome at Diane Leary's dinner table. After attending church at Concord Baptist and singing in the choir, Leary returns home to prepare Sunday lunch.

Beginning MeMe's Recipes

Wanting to preserve their grandmother's culinary traditions, Leary's grandchildren encouraged her to start documenting her cooking methods. She began writing a cookbook and posting cooking videos on social media under the name, "MeMe's Recipes."

Her efforts culminated in a cookbook, "Sunday Lunch with MeMe," which she gifted to her family for Christmas. Leary also donates a portion of the profits from each cookbook to missions. "The Lord has truly blessed it and it has just been far more than we could have ever expected," she said.

Cooking as a Ministry

What started as a way to share family recipes has blossomed into a ministry. She weaves God's love into her content, ending each video by saying, "Shine for Jesus." She said, "I consider myself a kitchen missionary. I serve, love, and encourage others by cooking."

For Leary, one of the most rewarding parts of the work is how it has touched the lives of those across the world. A man from Arkansas shared that her videos inspired him to get involved with his church again. He told her that he recognized a joy in her that his life had been missing. "We're just doing cooking, but the testimonies that we have received from people have been totally unbelievable."

Leary serves cake at Sunday lunch.

Courier Publishing Releases Resources to Equip Church Leaders



Courier Publishing aims to publish books that help church leaders. It is a subsidiary of The Baptist Courier, which has been “in the ministry of Christian journalism since 1869.” Courier Publishing is committed to offering resources that provide practical and spiritual guidance for pastors and congregations.

“Courier Publishing exists as an arm of The Baptist Courier to put biblically sound books in the hands of pastors and churches to equip them to be faithful stewards of the Gospel and the inspired, inerrant Word of God for this generation and those to come,” says Jeff Robinson, president and editor-in-chief of Courier Publishing.

SCBaptist Leaders Extend Their Ministry Through Writing

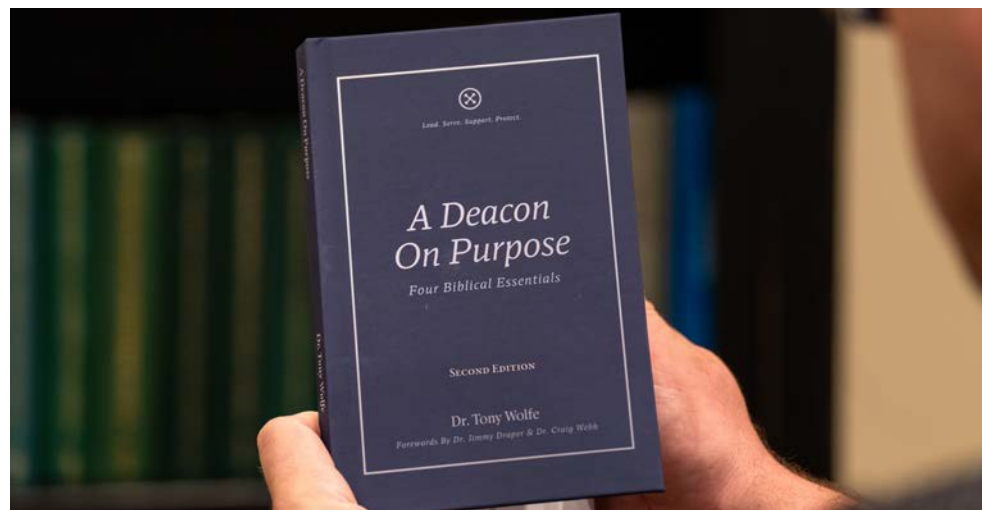
Recent releases include works from several SCBaptist pastors and ministry leaders. These include “Learning to Fly” by Timothy Coker, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Darlington, and “My Own Backyard” by Danny Nicholson, president of Connie Maxwell Children’s Home. Dr. Wayne Dickard’s “Trust God’s Promises” emphasizes the reliability of

God’s Word, while Dwight and Tabitha Easler’s “Squinting to See the Rainbow” offers a testimony of faith through personal tragedy.

Through Courier Publishing, SCBaptist pastors and ministry leaders have a platform to share their insights and experiences with a wider audience, extending their ministry beyond their local churches. By partnering with Courier Publishing, these leaders are able to inspire others in ministry, helping them to navigate their own challenges and grow spiritually.

These books are just a few examples of how Courier Publishing continues to faithfully provide resources, helping to guide today’s church and inspire future generations.

Courier Publishing put out “A Deacon on Purpose,” a resource to help churches and deacons thrive.





Funding Missions Through Baptist Foundation



Reverend Ryan Eklund passed away in September 2023 at the age of 91, leaving behind a rich legacy of faith and a generous endowment to be used for missions.

“The Baptist Foundation helps individuals realize their gifts through estate planning services and giving strategies,” stated Jacquelyn Wenger, chief administrative officer for the Baptist Foundation of South Carolina. “We help God’s people fund the Great Commission.”

Eklund faithfully served the Lord in both ministry and finances. In the 1950s, Eklund’s pastoral ministry began at Double Branch Baptist Church. His ministry continued for 67 more years — pastoring 12 churches, conducting around 500 weddings, directing 450

funerals, participating in 80 revivals, and ordaining 17 people into ministry.

Funding Missions

In 1986, Eklund set up a charitable trust to provide income for his family after his death. When the trust matures, the remainder will go to the Eklund Missions Fund, an endowment providing around \$10,000 a year to South Main Street Baptist Church. The fund covers expenses or supplies for international or domestic mission trips and has received gifts totaling \$256,000+ since its inception.

Eklund’s generosity ensures South Main Street Baptist Church will provide mission opportunities for years to come.

Pastor Eklund served in SC Baptist churches for over 65 years.



Mt. Nebo Equipping Disciples to Make Disciples



Mt. Nebo Baptist Church's discipleship class is transforming both individuals and the broader community. With over 30 baptisms in the last four years and most of those occurring in the last two, the effects are evident.

A Commitment to Discipleship

The strategy focuses on an eight-week discipleship training program designed to equip church members to become disciples who can teach others. Each week, participants answer two pivotal questions: "How have you been following Christ?" and "How have you been fishing?"

Pastor Ron Henderson emphasized that the class is not a groundbreaking idea but rather a return to the basics. "We're just trying to be consistent to do the things we are asked to do as believers," he said.

The program has caused a ripple effect, "creating an atmosphere of disciples making disciples, which is our church's DNA," Henderson said.

Equipping Members

Through the program, members are equipped to share their faith and build relationships within the community. "We're becoming more proactive in doing what Jesus calls us to do in Matthew 28, to go and make disciples," said Henderson.

As Pastor Henderson puts it, "We aren't trying to pack the seats at Mt. Nebo; we're trying to pack heaven and shrink hell."

Left: Mt. Nebo members serve at the Spartanburg Soup Kitchen.
Right: Members of Mt. Nebo engage the community.



Connie Maxwell Encouraging Foster Families at THRIVE



SCBaptists across the state joined for fellowship, encouragement, and equipping in their calling as foster parents at THRIVE.

“At any given day, there are over 4,000 children in foster care in South Carolina,” Jay Boyd, senior vice president for ministry strategy & engagement at Connie Maxwell Children’s Ministries, said. Connie Maxwell partnered with Taylors First Baptist and Lake Murray Baptist to host THRIVE.

Supporting Foster Care Families

Whether attendees were fostering or were considering becoming foster parents, these events provided a valuable opportunity to connect with others walking the same path.

Supporting foster care families throughout the state is just one facet of Connie Maxwell’s “Decade of Dreams,” a ten-year plan to become a national leader

in healing and ministry for vulnerable children and families.

Partnering with SCBaptist Churches

“We want to help churches make it easy to do hard things. We know more foster families will thrive when they feel supported,” Boyd said. Jon Jamison, Serve Team Leader at SCBaptist, expressed how blessed SCBaptists are to have Connie Maxwell Children’s Ministries helping churches create strategies around caring for vulnerable children across our state. Jamison said, “Connie Maxwell is a tremendous resource for our churches as they tangibly demonstrate the hope of the Gospel in their communities.”

Left: Attendees were encouraged by the message they heard from keynote speaker, Maggie Dunn.

Right: Attendees received free childcare, a free meal, and door prizes at THRIVE.

How the Cooperative Program Changed My Life



Let me tell you a story about a young boy who grew up in South Carolina. When he was just a little boy, some Baptists contributed to the Cooperative Program (CP). This money was sent to a building in Columbia where a staff member collected the mail, another staff member deposited and distributed the money appropriately. Part of that money went to an assistant mailing out camp forms.

The boy's parents filled out one of those forms and sent him to a camp overseen by a staff committed to the mission. At camp, the boy learned that God loves him and that God wants to spread the love of Jesus around the world.

Baptists continued to give. Some of that money paid for a staff member to fix the computer of an administrative assistant who answered the emails of a Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) Director. This BCM Director ensured there was a BCM at Clemson University.

Later that year, the BCM Director encouraged the boy, now a college student, to spend his Christmas break sharing the Gospel in China. There, he shared with a young Chinese man who had never heard the name of Jesus.

Baptists kept giving, and others at that building in Columbia kept making the youth camp better and better. One day, that young college student, now a youth director at a church, led many students to faith at the same youth camp that had impacted him as a preteen.

Baptists kept giving. Some staff at that building organized a vision trip connecting pastors with church planters. The youth director, now pastor of an SCBaptist church, went on that vision trip, connected with a church planter, and led his church to partner with that church planter.

Those Baptists who gave are members of the churches of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, that building in Columbia is its headquarters, and those dedicated individuals are its amazing staff. That little boy, now a pastor in this state, is me.

Thank you to all those who have given sacrificially to the Cooperative Program. I am grateful for the eternal impact the South Carolina Baptist Convention has had on my life and the lives of countless others through the churches' contributions to the Cooperative Program.

Zack Little
Associate Pastor
Renewal Church



100 Years and Beyond



2025 is the centennial anniversary of the Cooperative Program. Over \$20 billion has been given through this unified Southern Baptist missions-funding strategy since its inception—over \$1.3 billion of it flowing through the hearts and hands of SCBaptists. Hallelujah! But in every generation, the Great Commission success of SCBaptists, and Southern Baptists at large, is directly correspondent to the sacrificial generosity of our Baptist people through their Baptist churches. This shared mission will continue and enlarge only to the degree that SCBaptists in cooperating churches faithfully and sacrificially invest in it.

In 1925, just before the vote that would officially create the Cooperative Program, M.E. Dodd recognized the potential of a “unity of purpose and consecration” in their shared missions-funding proposal and called upon the Lord of the harvest for success: “May God help our people to see it.” Today, my prayer is the same. The harvest is plentiful, and the workers are few. We have been entrusted a Great Commission. We have made great commitments. We have before us a great opportunity. May God help our people to see it.

Dr. Tony Wolfe
Executive Director-Treasurer
South Carolina Baptist Convention



each church every life

This SCBaptist resource is made possible through the Cooperative Program giving of South Carolina Baptist churches.



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