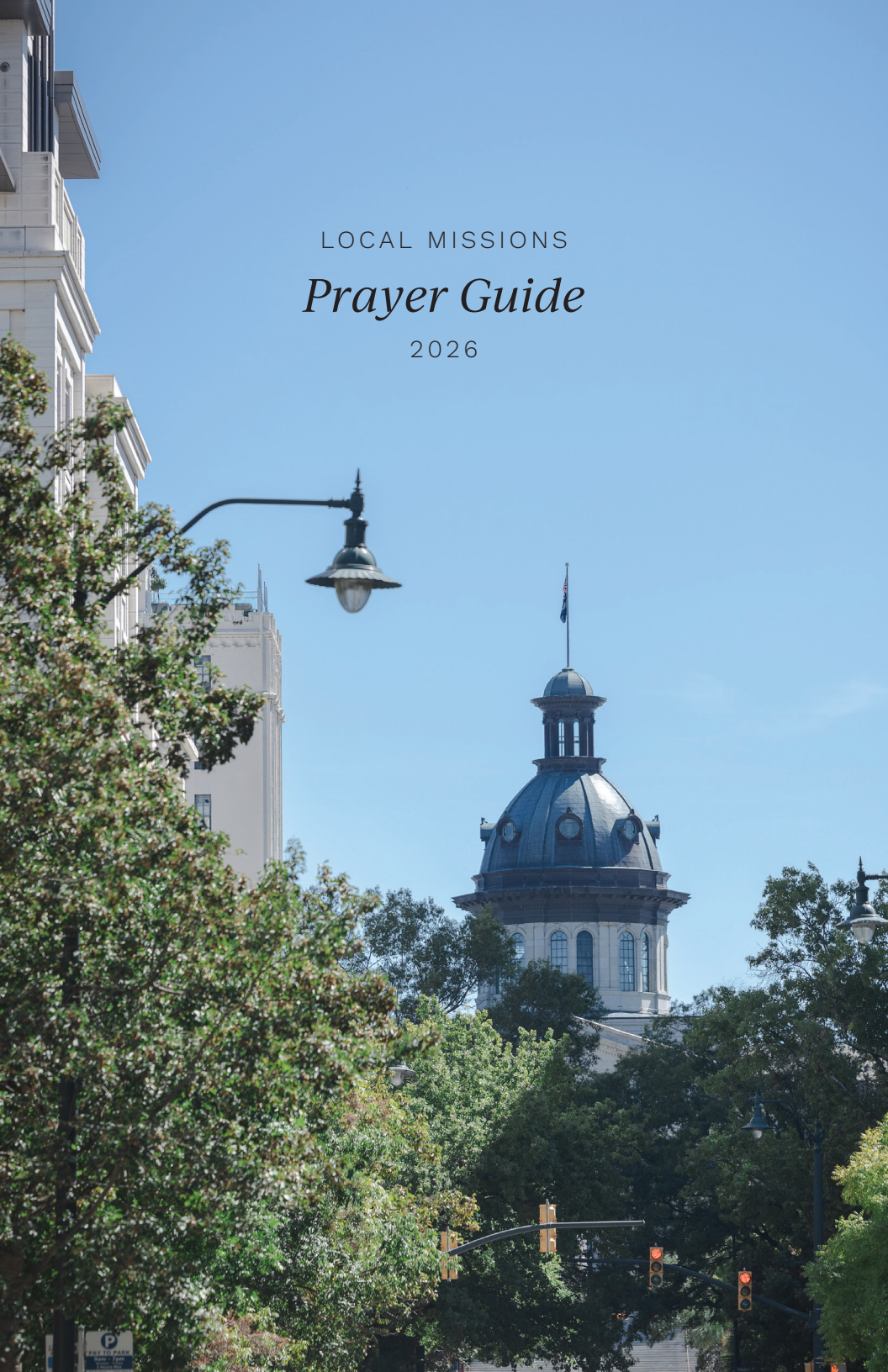
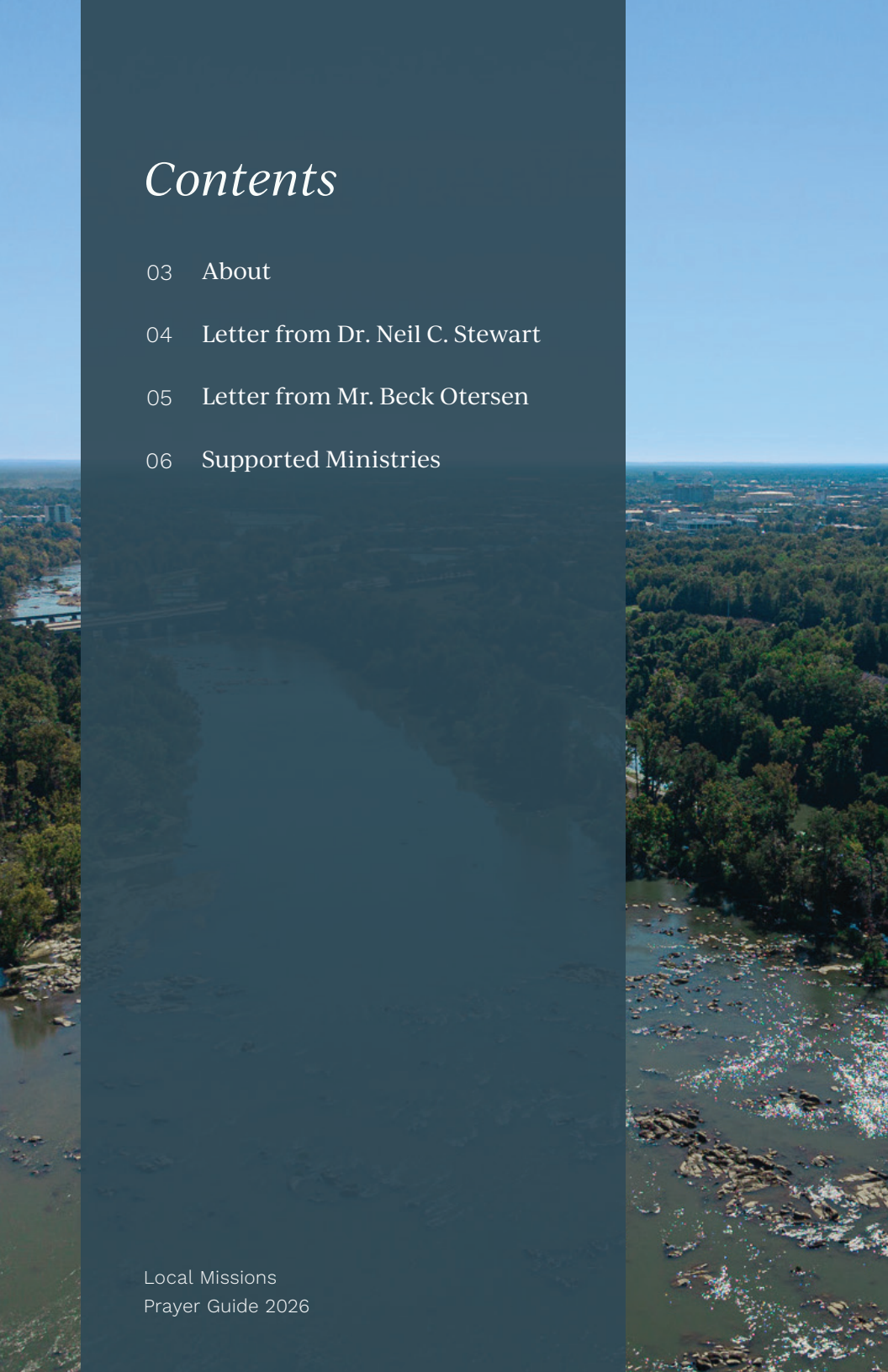


LOCAL MISSIONS

Prayer Guide

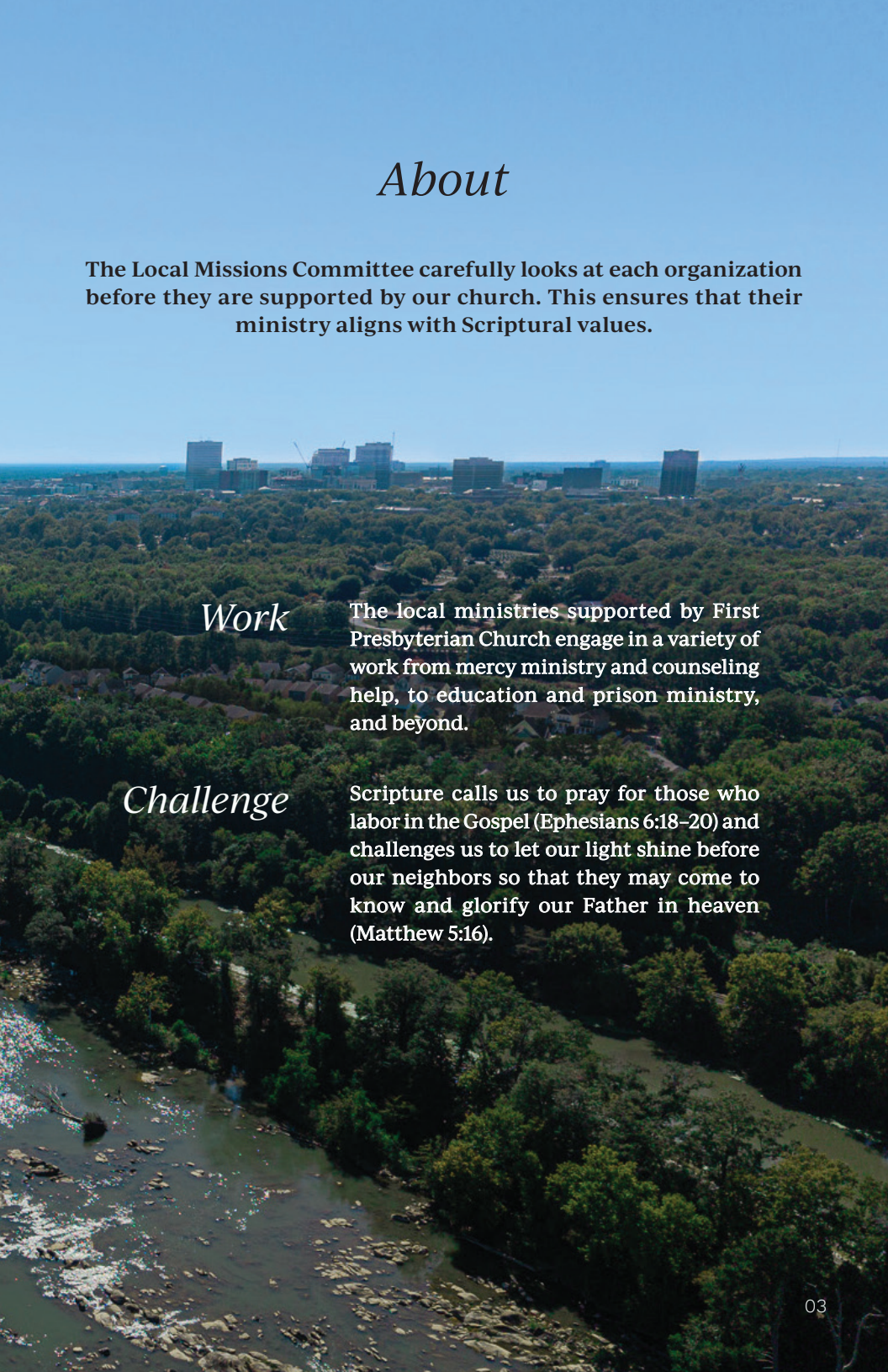
2026





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An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a river flows through a dense forest. The middle ground is filled with lush green trees. In the background, several tall buildings and construction cranes are visible against a clear blue sky.

About

The Local Missions Committee carefully looks at each organization before they are supported by our church. This ensures that their ministry aligns with Scriptural values.

Work

The local ministries supported by First Presbyterian Church engage in a variety of work from mercy ministry and counseling help, to education and prison ministry, and beyond.

Challenge

Scripture calls us to pray for those who labor in the Gospel (Ephesians 6:18–20) and challenges us to let our light shine before our neighbors so that they may come to know and glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

Matthew tells us that when Jesus went through the towns and villages of Galilee, *“He saw the crowds, [and] he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd”* (Matthew 9:36). What he said to his disciples next deserves close attention. He did not say, “The harvest is plentiful, therefore organize.” He said, *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest”* (Matthew 9:37b–38).

Pray first. Not because prayer is the least we can do, but because the harvest is not ours. Columbia does not belong to us, and neither do her people. They belong to the Lord of the harvest, who bought his elect at a price beyond our capacity to fathom. Prayer, then, is not what we do until the real work begins. Prayer is the engine that drives the whole. As John Bunyan observed, “We can do more than pray once we have prayed. But we cannot do more than pray until we have prayed.”

And the crowds are here. They are harassed and helpless behind perfectly ordinary faces: the neighbor three doors down whose marriage is quietly coming apart; the student who arrived on campus in August already exhausted; the woman who will sleep tonight a mile from this sanctuary with nowhere to put her children. Galilee is not far away. Galilee has a zip code—and it is here.

The pages that follow will introduce you to the men and women laboring in that field on our behalf, and to the ministries this congregation is privileged to support. Pray for them by name. Pray for their perseverance when the work is slow, and for their patience when it is not. Pray for the people they serve, whom the Lord knows by name already.

But read one verse further than we usually do. Having told his disciples to pray for laborers, Jesus *“called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority”* and sent them out (Matthew 10:1). The men commanded to pray for workers became the workers. That is very often how the Lord of the harvest answers.

So, as you pray your way through this guide, hold a question open before God: Might this be a field I am meant to enter? Not every reader will be sent, of course. But some of you are holding this guide because the answer is yes, and you do not yet know it. We have called Beck Otersen as our Local Missions Director for precisely this purpose: to connect the burden you feel to the needs of our city and its people.

The Lord of the harvest delights to send laborers. Ask him. And then be ready to become an answer to your own prayer—from this fair city to the ends of the earth.

Dr. Neil C. Stewart
Senior Minister



I am delighted to welcome you to our Local Missions Prayer Guide. First Presbyterian Church supports thirty-eight local ministries. These organizations witness for Christ in various ways, through word and deed, in Columbia and throughout our state. We are glad to partner with them as we seek to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20).

Prayer is one of the most important ways we participate in the Great Commission. In the New Testament, we frequently see the church praying for Gospel ministry. Jesus exhorted his disciples to pray for ministers (Matthew 9:38). The early church prayed earnestly for Peter after he was imprisoned for preaching the Gospel (Acts 12:5). Paul repeatedly requested prayer for his ministry (e.g., Ephesians 6:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:1). This pattern is instructive. It means that the work of missions is not something reserved for a select few members of the church. Rather, the whole church is called to participate in the work of missions through prayer.

The Old Testament church prayed, *“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!”* (Psalm 67:1–3). It is our prayer that God would bless Gospel ministry in our community so that our neighbors may join the worldwide company of worshipers giving praise to our gracious God.

Mr. Beck Otersen

Director of Local Missions



“The whole church is called to participate in the work of missions through prayer.”

A Moment of Hope



About the Ministry

A Moment of Hope is a Christian outreach to women seeking abortions. They minister through sidewalk counseling and mobile ultrasounds outside of the local abortion clinic. Mothers who choose life are paired with a care team in a local church to receive practical support and spiritual nourishment.

Prayer Requests

- For lives to be saved from abortion and for hearts to be turned to Christ
- For perseverance and encouragement for the staff and volunteers
- For wisdom that the staff and volunteers might be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves, as Jesus instructed

amoh.org

American Heritage Girls



About the Ministry

American Heritage Girls is a Christ-centered leadership and character development ministry for young girls aged K-12. They seek to help girls grow in the knowledge of the Lord through badgework, activities, camping, and more.

Prayer Requests

- For young girls to know that they are daughters of the Lord in Christ and to be assured of his love for them
- For current leaders to have continued energy and passion for service this ministry
- For more mothers to be eager to serve in leadership and helping roles

Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church



About the Ministry

Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church (ARP) was re-particularized in 2022. Their vision is for an increasingly diverse expression of the body of Christ in downtown Columbia and for many sinners to find forgiveness, hope, love, and acceptance in Jesus. First Presbyterian particularly supports their worship ministry.

Prayer Requests

- For Myron Brooker, their pianist, and for the worship team to grow in grace and faithfully lead the congregation's corporate singing and music .
- For the Lord to raise up more members with gifts to aid the team who leads worship through music.
- For the Lord to bless the church's outreach efforts so that many sinners find salvation in Jesus Christ .

arsenalhill.org

Blue Ridge Ministries



About the Ministry

Blue Ridge Ministries offers weekly parenting and life-skills classes for incarcerated men and women to help them fulfill their God-given roles in the family, church, and community. They share the gospel with attendees and seek to equip them to live faithfully.

Prayer Requests

- For safety, health, and strength for the staff and volunteers.
- For the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of the attendees to bring them to faith and help them grow in the Lord.

Camp Joy of South Carolina



About the Ministry

Camp Joy SC is a Christian camp for individuals with intellectual disabilities. It is an overnight camp where campers are paired with a counselor for one week. Each camper and his or her counselor participates in Bible studies, crafts, recreational activities, and daily chapel to learn about Jesus.

Prayer Requests

- For an abundance of staff and counselors to serve each week of camp
- For God to raise up future staff members as the camp seeks to grow
- For the campers to come to know, or grow in their relationship with, Jesus
- For the counselors and staff to model Christ and to grow in the Lord themselves

campjoy.net

Capitol Ambassadors



About the Ministry

Capitol Ambassadors is an outreach organization that is committed to being God's ambassadors in the political arena. They reach out with the Gospel—the one message that can bring reconciliation between a holy God and sinful man—to political leaders in South Carolina.

Prayer Requests

- For guidance for additional board members
- For their various speaking engagements at churches, fellowship groups, home gatherings
- For resource development and upcoming outreach events

Child Evangelism Fellowship



About the Ministry

CEF is a worldwide organization whose purpose is to evangelize boys and girls in the public school with the gospel of Jesus Christ, to disciple them in the word of God, and to establish them in the local church.

Prayer Requests

- For children who will attend the Good News Clubs to believe in the Lord Jesus and grow in their faith
- For the Lord to open doors as they seek to establish Good News Clubs at new schools
- For the Lord to provide for the volunteers and staff of CEF Columbia Midlands

cefonline.com

Christian Medical and Dental Association



About the Ministry

Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) exists to know Christ and to make him known to their staff, patients, coworkers, community, and the broader world. They provide resources, networking opportunities, education, and a public voice for Christian healthcare professionals and students.

Prayer Requests

- For fruitful outreach among students at the USC School of Medicine
- For upcoming short-term medical mission trips
- For wisdom to build a strategic plan for future CMDA ministry in Columbia

cmda.org

CIU Prison Initiative



About the Ministry

The CIU Prison Initiative is an accredited degree program that offers inmates the opportunity to earn an associate degree from CIU. Upon graduation, student inmates minister under the leadership of their institution's chaplain. The Prison Initiative has graduated over 200 students who now serve 21 correctional institutions in SC.

Prayer Requests

- For the students who are currently taking classes to grow in their love for the Lord
- For their graduates who are serving at different institutions around the state
- For opportunities to share the Gospel with inmates and others who have never heard it

advancement.ciu.edu/projects/prison-initiative

The Cooperative Ministry



About the Ministry

The Cooperative Ministry exists to increase the economic self-sufficiency of people experiencing poverty in the Midlands. Founded in 1982, they serve others through financial assistance, empowerment coaching, free clothing, furniture, and food, free income tax preparation, career improvement services, and insurance counseling.

Prayer Requests

- For God to provide peace and hope to their clients
- For their staff and volunteers to be faithful witness to God's love in the Gospel

Daybreak Lifecare Center



About the Ministry

Daybreak is a gospel ministry for people in the Midlands area who are facing unplanned pregnancy. They endeavor to show the love of Christ to all who come for services. They offer many free services including pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, pregnancy options consultations, biblical counseling, male mentoring, and abortion recovery counseling.

Prayer Requests

- For more volunteers to serve as client advocates and male mentors
- For those who are considering an abortion to find their way to Daybreak and to choose life
- For God to provide the resources their clients need

daybreakcola.org

Ezekiel Ministries



About the Ministry

Ezekiel Ministries partners with local churches to recruit loving adult mentors who will make a long-term investment in the lives of children. They seek to provide positive role models through mentoring, apprenticeship, and after-school programs, with a focus on reading, math, character-building, and spiritual well-being.

Prayer Requests

- For God to provide the resources needed to sustain and grow their ministry
- For more volunteers who are willing to mentor the many children they serve
- For the children they serve to know Christ and to grow in their relationship with him

ezeministries.org

Fellowship of Christian Athletes



About the Ministry

Midlands Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) seeks to impact the lives of coaches and athletes throughout their 15-county area. They serve middle schools, high school, and colleges across central SC. Their mission is to lead coaches and athletes into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and his church.

Prayer Requests

- For wisdom and guidance as they search for a new Multi-Area Director
- For their staff to persevere in their faith and to live as faithful witnesses and godly examples
- For opportunities to share the gospel with athletes and coaches who are not believers

fca.org

Focused Living



About the Ministry

Focused Living is a non-profit ministry to men in Columbia. Their passion is to help men begin a dynamic relationship with Christ, grow in their faith, and get connected to a healthy local church. They offer daily forums and a semester-long discipleship track each fall and spring.

Prayer Requests

- For the teaching team to be faithful in their study and preparation and for the Spirit to give them strength for their ministry
- For men to receive salvation through hearing God's word in the forums
- For men in the discipleship tracks to be sanctified by the Spirit through their engagement with God's word, prayer, and Christian fellowship

About the Ministry

Forge is an itinerant ministry that proclaims the gospel in a wide variety of settings. Their heart is to see nonbelievers come to know Christ and to see believers deepen their relationship with Christ.

Prayer Requests

- For spiritual revival around the world and for the Lord to raise up laborers to go out into the harvest
- For the Lord to give the staff every word to say to boldly and faithfully proclaim the Gospel

forgeforward.org

Gideons *International*



About the Ministry

The Gideons International is an association of Christian professionals dedicated to telling people about Jesus Christ by providing Bibles and sharing their personal testimonies. They place and distribute copies of the Scriptures in the lanes and byways of life.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to open doors for opportunities to distribute copies of the Bible in new areas around Columbia
- For more individuals and churches to join with them in their work
- For people to meet the living God through his word

Harvest Hope



About the Ministry

Harvest Hope is dedicated to eliminating hunger and food insecurity throughout South Carolina. They operate programs that provide food for the vulnerable citizens, including children, seniors, and rural residents.

Prayer Requests

- For God to bless their work as they strive to eliminate hunger
- For God to give hope and encouragement to those experiencing food insecurity
- The Harvest Hope's efforts would glorify God and make positive impact on the neighbors they serve

harvesthope.org

International Friendship Ministries



About the Ministry

International Friendship Ministries (IFM) seeks to introduce international students and their families to Jesus Christ so that they might enter into a saving relationship with him. The engage international students through sincere friendship, genuine hospitality, and true Christian love.

Prayer Requests

- For international students and their families to confess faith in Christ and find life in his name
- For more individuals willing to serve as Christian friendship partners to international students
- For their weekly dinners on Friday nights to be an effective and fruitful outreach

About the Ministry

InterVarsity is a community on campus and for the campus. Their main activity is facilitating small groups to build community and study the Bible. Their hope is that students grow in love for God, his word, his people, and his purposes.

Prayer Requests

- For their staff to be wise as they steward the growth that they have been experiencing on campus
- For their student leaders to grow in love for God and in wisdom as they lead their peers and facilitate groups
- For students who are not Christians to come to know, follow, and worship Jesus as Savior and Lord

intervarsity.org

Joy of Abiding Ministries



About the Ministry

Joy of Abiding is a ministry focused on teaching God's word to women of all ages and backgrounds. They strive both to introduce nonbelievers to Christ and to help believers grow in joy of abiding in Christ. They gather for fellowship, singing, and Bible study.

Prayer Requests

- For outreach to young adult women and for the formation of intergenerational relationships
- For women to receive the word of God, abide in Christ, and bear spiritual fruit
- For the Holy Spirit to empower the teachers to be faithful and effective in their service

About the Ministry

Lifeline offers compassionate care and support to vulnerable children, families, and expectant mothers. They provide a variety of services, including adoption, foster care, counseling, and education. Their vision is to see vulnerable children and their communities transformed by the Gospel and making disciples.

Prayer Requests

- For more expectant mothers to hear about Lifeline so that they can share life affirming options
- For opportunities to have gospel conversations and share the hope of Christ with people in difficult situations
- For the Lord to raise up more volunteers and adoptive families in South Carolina

lifelinechild.org

Lighthouse for Life



About the Ministry

Lighthouse for Life is committed to combating human trafficking by providing survivor support through education, care, and advocacy, and educating communities in prevention and intervention efforts. They are founded on the belief that every person is created in the image of God and worthy of freedom, dignity, and restoration.

Prayer Requests

- For survivors of human trafficking to find ultimate healing and hope in the Lord Jesus
- For increased awareness and involvement in the ministry
- For the Lord to protect, encourage, and strengthen the staff as they persevere in their ministry

About the Ministry

Love Cola exists to call the church of Greater Columbia to partner in covenant relationship to represent the gospel to every man, woman, and child in the city. They serve to mobilize participating churches and parachurch ministries to love and serve their communities.

Prayer Requests

- For more churches to partner with Love Cola in seeking to advance the gospel in Columbia
- For the Cola Network's various initiatives, including Love Cola and Pray Cola
- For the Lord to bring many people in the city of Columbia to saving faith in Jesus Christ

lovecola.org

Makers for Missions



About the Ministry

Makers for Missions is a service project that was first organized in 2022 under the Senior Adult Ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Their focus is making handmade items to be used as filler items for the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, such as knit hats, coloring books, jump ropes, and more.

Prayer Requests

- For the children who receive the shoeboxes, and their families, to experience the love of Christ
- For the recipients of the shoeboxes to follow-up with the informational material in the shoeboxes to learn more about the gospel
- For opportunities to share the gospel with unchurched volunteers who come to pack shoeboxes

Midtown Two Notch



About the Ministry

Midtown Two Notch is a church along Two Notch Road that focuses their ministry and outreach on impoverished, high-crime rate communities. They have done many prayer walks, block parties, and other service events to build relationships and share Christ with their neighbors.

Prayer Requests

- For more of their friends and neighbors along Two Notch Road to get more involved in the life of their church
- For their outreach efforts at Benedict College and for more students come to faith and join the fellowship of the church
- For God to provide the resources necessary to sustain the church's ministry for the long-term

midtowntwonotch.com

Oliver Gospel



About the Ministry

Oliver Gospel, the sixth oldest rescue mission in the United States, has been serving those in homelessness and poverty in the Midlands since 1888. They aim to engage people with the prayer their lives might be transformed by the power of Christ's love.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to provide safety, security, and good health for those in the Midlands experiencing homelessness
- For their staff members as they walk alongside guests of their programs
- For all those who come their way to see and know the love of Christ

Palmetto Family Council



About the Ministry

Palmetto Family Council's mission is to persuasively present biblical principles in the centers of influence on issues affecting the family through research, communication, and networking. Their vision is to see God honored, religious freedom preserved, families thrive, and life cherished.

Prayer Requests

- For their Church Ambassador Network to continue growing after its debut this year
- For God's clear guidance as they establish a new multi-year strategic plan
- For them to be effective in defending biblical values in the Statehouse and all across the state

palmettofamily.org

Pearls



About the Ministry

Pearls offers support, hope, and restoration to women working in Columbia's adult entertainment industry. Through monthly outreaches to local strip clubs, they build relationships with women working in the clubs and share the hope that is found only in Jesus.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to provide committed volunteers for their outreach team
- For the women they serve to be open to Christ and his gospel
- For the Lord to give the women they serve a desire and the resources to pursue life outside of the adult entertainment industry

youareapearl.com

Presbyterian Reformed Commission on Chaplains



About the Ministry

The Presbyterian Reformed Commission on Chaplains (PRCC) is dedicated to obeying Christ's Great Commission by providing men to serve as chaplains in both civilian and military areas of service. The Commission endorses ordained, qualified chaplains and helps presbyteries and congregations minister to military personnel and their families.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to raise up many faithful Reformed ministers to enter military and civilian chaplaincy ministries
- For the Lord to bless the Gospel ministry of current military and civilian chaplains to lead people to Christ and strengthen Christians in their organizations
- For the Lord's protection of military chaplains who are currently deployed
- For the Lord to bless the PRCC's ministry to veterans and their families facing PTSD and other deployment-related issues

pcamna.org

Providence Home



About the Ministry

Providence Home is a Christ-focused ministry that provides transitional housing, accountability, and stability for men to promote their recovery from addiction and incarceration. Relying on the life-saving grace of Jesus Christ, they help men be restored into their family and community.

Prayer Requests

- For wisdom for their staff and board as they minister to men in need
- For their residents to find salvation in Jesus Christ and to grow in grace so that they might live faithfully for the Lord
- For the Lord to provide for the mission so that they might continue and grow their ministry

Reformed University Fellowship



About the Ministry

RUF exists on the campus to reach students for Christ and to equip them to serve. They aim to do this with relational humility and honesty, as they love students through the avenue of ministry. They have a heart for the Gospel and the campus.

Prayer Requests

- For reaching new students through outreach events
- For new students who may be lonely, nervous, and looking for community
- For current students to grow in their faith and be passionate about reaching their neighbors on campus with the Gospel

ruf.org

School Ministries



About the Ministry

School Ministries exists to assist Christians and churches to start and grow Released Time Bible Education programs in their local communities. They provide resources, education, and step-by-step guidance to bring hope and purpose to the lives of K-12 public school students through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prayer Requests

- For favor in the eyes of the local school boards and administrators so that the ministry can be most effective
- For godly, faithful volunteers to teach the Bible to young people and model Christian love
- For young people to encounter Jesus Christ through His Word

South Carolina Study Center



About the Ministry

The South Carolina Study Center is a group of professors, students, and like-minded Christians who share the conviction that the Christian life can be described as “faith seeking understanding.” Their mission is to help shape students and teachers to think, live, and lead with Christian wisdom.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to provide support staff to assist their work
- For the Lord to bless their daily outreach to students
- For Christians to be increasingly transformed by the renewal of their minds and to deepen their engagement with the truths of God’s Word

scstudycenter.org

Search Ministries



About the Ministry

Search Ministries is a Gospel outreach that seeks to bring the best news in the world to spiritually curious adults. They seek to build relational bridges, offer weekly forums where people can learn and ask questions about Christianity, and invite people to faith in Christ.

Prayer Requests

- For the spiritually lost to believe in Jesus and find life in his name
- For the Lord to raise up mission-minded individuals to be involved in their Forum series
- For the Lord to provide for, protect, and guide the staff as they seek to bring the Gospel to the lost

Teen Challenge



About the Ministry

Adult and Teen Challenge is a Christ-centered recovery ministry providing residential care to young people and adults who struggle with life-controlling problems. They reach out to those with addictions and care for them in residential centers. They also assist local churches through support ministries for hurting people and families in their congregations and communities.

Prayer Requests

- For the men in their program to experience freedom from addiction, to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, and to walk faithfully with God
- For God to provide resources, volunteers, and community support needed for Teen Challenge Columbia
- For wisdom, strength, and protection for their staff and leadership as they minister to individuals and families impacted by addiction and life-controlling issues

teenchallenge.cc

Toby's Place



About the Ministry

Toby's Place, which opened in 2017, is Oliver Gospel's ministry to women and children. They offer a long-term transitional housing program to equip residents to build a sustainable lifestyle for themselves and their families.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to provide safety, security, and health for those in the Midlands experiencing homelessness
- For the staff members who walk alongside guests of their programs to be faithful witnesses
- For the Lord to empower residents to grow in their faith and to live healthy, faithful lives

About the Ministry

Trail Life USA (TLUSA) is a distinctly Christian outdoor adventure program that aims to help young men grow in godliness and Christian character and develop Christian as leaders.

Prayer Requests

- For the spiritual growth of their current adult leadership
- For more adult men to become involved in mentoring and ministering to young men
- For the young men in the program to grow in Christlike character

www.traillifeusa.com

YoungLife: Columbia, Downtown, One, and YoungLives



About the Ministry

YoungLife is an outreach ministry to middle school, high school, and college students. Their mission is to introduce students to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith. YoungLife Columbia and Downtown minister to students in local schools, YoungLife One reaches out to incarcerated youth, and YoungLives serves teen parents.

Prayer Requests

- For the Lord to continue raising up volunteers to reach young people with the Gospel
- For the Lord to open doors and give YoungLife favor in the eyes of local school districts and the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice
- For young people who do not know the Lord to find abundant life in Jesus Christ

In addition to supporting many local ministries in our community, our church reaches out into our community with the gospel in many ways.

***Here are just some of the ways you can
pray for our church's Gospel witness:***

- Pray that God would make our pastors' preaching of the word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners.
- Pray for the outreach efforts of our various ministries including the Children's Ministry, the Youth Ministry, the College Ministry, the Young Professionals Ministry, the Men's Ministry, the Women's Ministry, the Seniors' Ministry, the Music Ministry, the Special Needs Ministry, and the Sports Ministry.
- Pray for our Sunday School teachers and classes to be faithful lights for the Gospel.
- Pray for the regular meals we host on Sundays and Wednesdays to be opportunities for hospitality and Gospel witness.
- Pray for the Local Missions Committee of the Session.
- Pray for the Local Outreach Committee of the Diaconate.

Just as we pray for local ministries and local ministers, so also, we should pray for the lost in our community. Below is a model prayer to help guide your own prayers.

Our Father,

We thank you for calling us out of the darkness of sin and into the marvelous light of your grace. Once, we were not your people, but now we are your people; once, we had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy in Christ.

Help us to be faithful witnesses to you. We pray that you would empower us by your Spirit to proclaim your excellencies. Help us to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives and so adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. May those around us see our good deeds, the evidence of your grace, and give glory to you. Sanctify our speech so that every word we say is gracious and seasoned with salt.

O Lord, we long to see your churches full, yet there are many in our community who do not know you and do not have eternal life. We lift up our unbelieving family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors to you. Please take away their hearts of stone and give them hearts of flesh. We pray that you would give them a desire to read your Word and to learn Christ.

Father, your Son tells us that you are seeking worshipers. So, we pray most of all that more people may join in singing the praises of your glory and your redeeming grace.

We offer our prayer in the name of Christ, amen.





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firstprescolumbia.org