

infusion

Scripture: "Everything I do, I do to get the Good News to men. I want to have a part in this work." I Corinthians 9:19-23 (NLV)

Congregation Music:

"Let Others See Jesus in You," *Baptist Hymnal*, 1956, page 348; *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1975, page 294; *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1991, page 571.

"Rescue the Perishing," *Baptist Hymnal*, 1956, page 207; *Baptist Hymnal*, 1975, page 283; *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1991, page 559.

"Break Out, O Church of God," *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1991, page 401.

Children's Hymn: "When I Pray," *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1991, page 460.

Solo: "People Need the Lord," *The Baptist Hymnal*, 1991, page 557.

"Go Light Your World," *Short Term Memories* (CD), Chris Rice, Author

Lemyra Poole, Providence Baptist Church, Moncks Corner, Writer

Introduction

One definition of **infusion** is "a pouring in of something that gives new life or significance."¹ It is a word often heard in the medical field or in the culinary world. A patient is given an infusion of medicines to improve his life and change his circumstances. Chefs use an infusion of spices and herbs to improve the taste of a dish.

The Good News - the love, the hope, the peace of God - is the believer's **infusion** of Jesus' love and new life that is to be shared with people who are in need, who are friendless, and who are separated from God. This was Jesus' mission on earth. Paul's desire was to do everything he could to share the Good News with all people. His work led him to many places to bring the life-changing, life-sustaining **infusion** of God's love to those in need. He reminded the Corinthians of the work yet to be done - ministering to hurting people, building relationships with people even if they are unlikable, offering reconciliation through Jesus, and teaching others to follow Jesus. Through God's love, the **infusion** of a new life in Him, we believers can offer hope and meaning to life. This is our mission from Jesus.

According to statistics, almost 77% of the population in our state is "unchurched."² That means that about three million residents do not attend church on a regular basis. This is evidence of a giant mission field within South Carolina. Churches and associations are reaching out in diverse ways to offer an **infusion** of the gospel to the hurting and lost world.

Infusion through Community Ministries

Community Ministry Centers (CMC) are meeting needs and sharing Christ in their communities. Batesburg-Leesville Christian Ministry Center in Lexington Association and Midland Park Ministry Center in Charleston Association are two examples of what it means to love people in Jesus' name by caring for their needs.

Batesburg-Leesville Christian Ministry Center provides a ministry that offers long-term solutions - both physical and spiritual to people facing economic difficulties. This center has been serving low income families of all races in 11 zip codes in Lexington, Aiken, Edgefield and Saluda counties for 20 years.³

Clients come to the center through pastor referrals and word of mouth. After clients are interviewed and a plan of action is decided, the volunteers pray with them. Hearing their names lifted in prayer is an uplifting experience for hurting people. A volunteer also counsels with the clients.

Ministry director Margaret Wilson, a Mission Service Corps (MSC) missionary, worked in insurance claims for 30 years before she felt God speaking to her about going to another area. She and her husband, Willard, served in the Appalachian Regional Ministry in Oceana, West Virginia for eighteen months, reaching out to hurting people.⁴ Now, back in South Carolina, her heart still beats for hurting people.

The center's mission is to demonstrate the gospel through meeting human needs. The center provides food, clothing, and some financial help for utilities. Churches, individuals and local businesses help support the Christian Ministry Center through their prayers, finances, groceries, clothing and volunteering. The World Hunger Fund helps the center buy food at Harvest Hope Food Bank and locally to keep the shelves stocked.

The ministry serves people like Shirley, the sole support for seven grandchildren. The center helps provide food and clothing for the family. When her daughter had a baby while in prison, Shirley took the baby and the Christian Ministry Center was able to supply the basic needs for the baby.

Tony's family was homeless when they came to the ministry center. He had been hurt on his job as a bricklayer. Christian Ministry Center was able to provide lodging, pay for some medicines and refer them to other agencies for food stamps and a trailer. These families are grateful for the **infusion** of God's love Christian Ministry Center volunteers and supporters showed them.

Margaret says, "Christ is working here. He helped meet the needs of those He met and we see needs being met here, too."⁵ Christian Ministry Center workers show love, compassion and caring for each

Look inside for information that can be used with
 Adults (Page 5), Youth (Pages 5- 6), Children (Pages 6-7),
 and Preschoolers (Pages 7-8).

client. Margaret is thankful for the dedicated workers who give of their time to share with the clients. Gene Ray and Celia have volunteered their time for almost twenty years even though Gene Ray is totally blind and Celia is legally blind. This couple does anything to help; Gene Ray even tapes satellite Christian radio programs to give to the clients. They always have a kind word for everyone.

Youth groups from churches in the association help the center through food drives and by volunteering two Wednesday nights per month, showing God's love and praying for the clients and the work of the center.

"God has sent faithful volunteers," says Margaret.⁶ As one would have to leave, God sent a new volunteer. When a Spanish interpreter was needed, God sent three ladies to help; when someone to help with computer work was needed, God sent Carol who is such a blessing! She helps interview clients and counsels with them that they might come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Annie Fay, former director of the center, tells how God always provides. A grieving man came to the center to see if he could get a white shirt to wear to his father's funeral. A white shirt could not be found in the clothing closet, but a man came in at that time to donate some clothing. There were several white shirts hanging over his shoulder. Annie Fay was reminded that God comes right on time.

Midland Park Baptist Church in North Charleston started in 1946 and grew strong as families from the community joined the congregation. The face of the neighborhood changed over the next decades, and members commuted to the church from surrounding areas. They quickly outgrew the facilities and began looking for land to build a larger facility. God provided land a few miles away on Dorchester Road for a new church called Riverbluff. Members did not want to abandon the area around Midland Park and in 2002 opened an outreach ministry to benefit low income families by utilizing the facilities on Midland Park Road. The bond between church and community was strong; thus, Midland Park Community Ministries (MPCM) was born.⁷

The goal of Riverbluff Church was to develop missions congregations and a community outreach ministry. Both parts of this goal have been met. A Hispanic congregation, Iglesia Nueva Vida, and Grace Community Fellowship meet at the center. The ministry meets basic human needs through a food pantry (supported through World Hunger Funds), a clothes closet, utilities financial assistance and referrals to a job placement agency. The center offers a preschool program (Mom's Morning Out) for three-year-old children. Their mothers receive literacy education. An after school homework center helps children improve PACT scores. ESL and Spanish classes are offered to help break language barriers. Through the help of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Elko and M-Fuge, the Kid's Camp is a big success in the summer. MPCM partners with many other community organizations and churches with the same mission and values to accomplish its goals.⁸

MPCM director, Wynette Miller, went through the Experiencing God course and completed a social work degree in the 90's. She felt God moving in her life and He provided a way for Wynette, a cancer survivor, to go into Christian outreach ministries through Midland Park Community Ministries. Her husband Larry, a heart transplant recipient, volunteers as Building and Grounds director for the ministry.⁹

Two former clients of the Midland Park Community Ministries have become involved with one of the mission congregations, Grace Community Fellowship, and help minister in the community. "Andrew" and "Alice" received food, a place to stay and job referrals at a low

time in their lives. Two volunteers prayed with them and gave them a Bible. They both wanted to know God, and in March 2007, they were baptized. There has been a remarkable change in the character and spiritual development of this couple. The **infusion** of God's love has given them a new life; they now share the love of Christ and the importance of knowing Him with their family and friends.¹⁰

When "Mary" came to MPCM for help with food, she had a problem with depression and was angry at God for her mother's death. Almost eighteen months later, the Lord opened "Mary's" heart to receive Jesus. Getting her connected to a church family is the goal now.

Over 65 women and girls attended a community-wide Christmas brunch and received a gift from the women's ministry to make them "feel pretty." Members of the two missions made great connections at this event.

Wynette said, "Volunteers are a blessing and our greatest asset. Without them MPCM could not operate." Three of the food pantry volunteers sensed a real need to understand the language of the Hispanic clients who come to the center for assistance with food and clothing. When Charleston Baptist Association offered conversational Spanish for Christian workers, they signed up because they want to build a relationship and be able to tell the clients about Jesus in their heart language. A member of Riverbluff, Maria Carmichael, is bilingual and agreed to teach at the Midland Park site. Eight other church members attended.¹¹

Sharing the **infusion** of God's love with hurting and lost people is the mission of community ministries.

Pray:

Batesburg-Leesville Community Center:

- For more volunteers infused with God's love for people, for donations of food and paper products;
- For bi-lingual volunteers, especially Spanish speakers and for continued health of workers;
- For clients to come to know the Lord as Savior.

Midland Park Ministry Center:

- That as an outreach center, the staff and volunteers will be the salt and light in that community;
- When clients come in with needs, the staff and volunteers will see them through the eyes of Christ - with no judgment and treat them with Christian compassion and respect;
- For the pastors and the body of Riverbluff to be blessed;
- For more Christian support groups: parenting, men's and women's groups;
- For the two missions to grow and more to be started.

Infusion Through Fair Ministry

Many of us get excited when we hear the fair is coming to town. We cannot wait to get to the midway for breath-taking rides, and, of course, our noses take us to the food vendors for a gyro, elephant ear, fried Oreos and cotton candy. Do you ever think about the men and women who work on the set-up crews? What is their life like, traveling all the time? Where are they when we are having fun? Do they know that God loves them and wants them to have a fulfilling life? Saluda Association started thinking about these workers twenty years ago and through the **infusion** of God's love has been ministering to them since then.

According to Jim Evatt, Church and Community Ministries

Director for the association, the emphasis of this ministry is to show God's love to about 150 migrant workers who set up the carnival rides. Most of them live in dire circumstances. Many of the men and women are addicted to drugs and alcohol and waste their salary to support their addictions.¹²

The goal of this ministry is to reach as many workers as possible for Christ by sharing His love. The team is always looking for ways to improve the ministry to better meet the needs of the workers. In 2005, some volunteers were trained as chaplains who would be available to workers each day of the fair. Two workers decided to leave the fair to get their lives on track in 2006. One was a 40-year-old female who told the chaplains of a dream in which she saw her grandmother singing in the church choir; later she made her way home to a better lifestyle.¹³

For three days before the fair opens, the ministry serves a lunch to the workers who set up the rides and concessions. Churches provide sandwiches, cookies, soft drinks, hygiene and health kits, and blankets. A salvation message is presented at this time. Senior Follies, a group of retired, professional musicians, provides entertainment. Spanish translators volunteer to make sure the language barrier does not hinder the work of showing God's love. Counselors and chaplains are available to talk to workers who need help. Volunteers give out Christian tracts and Bibles in English and Spanish. When special needs arise, the ministry is able to supply items such as food, clothing, blankets - once even a hearing aid and medical aid for a spider bite. Jim says the 76 churches in Saluda Association respond to the needs of the fair ministry in a big way - with supplies and volunteers. Three other associations, Pickens-Twelve Mile, Palmetto and Piedmont, helped with this ministry in 2006 and 2007.

One church has a clothing closet in the basement where volunteers get clothes and shoes for the workers who have these needs. Once on a cold day, a barefoot woman with blisters on her feet came for help. The counselor talked to her and found that she had a drug problem. She asked for a Bible, which was provided, and the volunteers got a pair of shoes for her from the church. The woman was appreciative and hugged the volunteers.

A Hispanic worker showed the tract that he had received at the lunch the day before and signed "I love Jesus." Jim says many of the Hispanics are hungry for The Word and will stand in line for a Bible. They often read the Bible or tracts before eating. After the worship service, volunteers sit with the workers and talk with them. They find that for many of the workers this is the only job available.

James E. Strates, who is in his 80's, owns the shows and expresses appreciation for the ministries to the workers. The ministry has proven to be such a help that the manager has given the ministry the freedom to do "anything you want to do." The workers are appreciative also. They offer cotton candy to the volunteers as a way of saying thanks.

Rick and Lisa were a homeless couple looking for a job at the fair. The volunteers gave them sandwiches every day and found Rick a job and a place for them to live. Rick said, "I don't know Jesus but if it hadn't been for Him, I would have starved this week." The man accepted Jesus as his Savior, and, in 2007, the couple were "walking for Jesus," helping where they could in this ministry.¹⁴

Buck Buchanan is one of the original organizers who worked with former Church and Communities Ministries Director Jim Murphy giving out sandwiches and cookies and dipping Kool-Aid from a container. Buck is in his 80's, but he works every day at the fair handing out canned drinks.

Janet Atkin, Mission Service Corps missionary, assists Jim Evatt

(current Church and Community Ministries Director) with the fair ministry. She said she was afraid of the workers until the Lord said, "Touch them; they're real; they need Me."¹⁵ Then she saw the hurting hearts and her attitude changed.

The fair ministry team encourages other churches and associations to get involved in a ministry like this. The fair management appreciates this ministry. The team asks them, "How can we help you make this a good week?" With God's guidance this has become a wonderful time of mutual respect. The ministry has grown from a table behind an antique fire truck that could not be seen to the owner of the fair giving "free rein" to this ministry.¹⁶ Saluda Association's **infusion** of love sees these fair workers as Jesus sees them and shares both physical and spiritual nourishment with them.

Pray:

- For more volunteers;
- For an openness to the Gospel;
- For wisdom in how to handle diversity of needs;
- For vision to expand the ministry;
- For other churches and associations to "become infused" with a vision to be involved in fair ministry;
- For continued cooperation of owners and management.

Infusion Through Homeless Ministry

For most of us, the homeless are nameless. The reality is each one has a name and a story. Each is a son, daughter, mother, father, brother, or sister. Each one may be hungry, uncomfortable, or in pain. Each homeless person needs an **infusion** of God's love.

In 2007, the official number of homeless people in our state was 6,759, including 1,329 children.¹⁷ Some of the issues that can bring a person to homelessness are severe mental illness, domestic violence, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and financial problems. The homeless count in 2005 showed there were 1,753 homeless people living in the Midlands.¹⁸ One church's **infusion** of God's love helped bring awareness about the homeless situation in their community.

Midtown Fellowship in Columbia decided to take action with a two-day event called "Homeless for the Homeless." This project was held to advocate a solution to homelessness in Columbia by increasing community awareness, raising monetary support, offering support to those already servicing the homeless, and relationally connecting with the homeless to give love and support. The church invited the community to come and "be homeless for the homeless." Each person who participated represented one of the 1,753 homeless individuals. To create a culture of homelessness and build awareness, participants slept outside at Finlay Park on a Friday night in November. Midtown's community missions pastor, Allen Tipping, was excited about the results of the sleep-out. More than 700 people from the community participated and more than \$10,000 (collected from participant fees) was given to direct services for the homeless in the city.¹⁹

The next day, participants were sent into service in the community to help those who serve the homeless by cleaning and repairing the buildings. They participated in prayerwalking to simulate the day in the life of a homeless person, held a bazaar and block party for the homeless, and celebrated with a commissioning service. Sociologist and professor emeritus at Eastern University in Pennsylvania, Tony Campolo, spoke at this service. He challenges individuals and churches to get involved in bringing about social justice for the homeless.²⁰

Midtown Fellowship's **infusion** of love to the homeless developed after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in 2005. About 2,500 evacuees came to Columbia following that disaster. Churches and individuals hosted many of them, providing food and child care.²¹

Columbia Metro Association has a project called "Homeless to Home" that several churches support. The association partners with the city to place homeless families in permanent housing. Beulah Baptist Church and Suburban Baptist Church sponsor a homeless mission in Finlay Park that sees 70 homeless people in worship services each week. They meet outdoors, rain or shine. The Biker Church at Suburban Baptist Church helps with this mission.²²

The **infusion** of God's love is seen through the desire of these churches to help the homeless. They recognized the needs and were compelled to take action by ministering to the homeless, offering hope and meaning to their lives through Jesus.

Pray:

- For the homeless to become visible to believers who will take action to minister to them;
- That Homeless to Home, Inc. will engage people to become involved in working with the homeless.

Infusion through Prison Ministry

In 2007, the adult prison population in our state was more than 23,500: 22,000 are male; 1,600 are female; the average age is 35; 60% have children; and 50% have reading scores below the 9th grade.²³ Christmas Packets for inmates touch many lives. A thank you letter from 20-year-old James explained how he asked God to forgive him of his sins after receiving the packet. He told his Christian cellmate who encouraged James to continue studying the scriptures to help with daily living in prison. James wanted to be baptized, and he was. The roommate "cleaned the sink out real good and put clean water in it," says James. He continues, "Then right there in our little room I got baptized. Now when I came up out of the water I felt like a new man. I felt different in a spiritual way."²⁴ Now James has an **infusion** of God's love that brings new life to everyone who will accept it, even in a prison setting.

Pray:

- For incarcerated men and women to come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior;
- For chaplains and missions volunteers who go to prisons to teach the Bible.

Conclusion

Paul's desire was to do everything he could to share the life-changing, life-sustaining **infusion** of God's love to those in need. As believers, we should have that same desire. Ministry centers, the fair ministry, the homeless ministry and prison ministries are making a difference in the lost and hurting world. There is a hungry world waiting for the **infusion** of God's love. The depth of our **infusion** of His love is measured by actions that fulfill Jesus' mission. How deep is your **infusion**?

**Resources to Assist You With Planning
the 2008 Season of Prayer for State Missions Observance**

Make sure you have these additional resources to assist you in planning your 2008 Season of Prayer for State Missions observance:

- Churchwide Observance
- Family Missions Page
- Children's Sermons
- Prayer Guide
- Sermon Helps
- Clip Art Page
- State Missions Facts Sheet
- Allocations Sheet
- Season of Prayer for State Missions DVD
- Season of Prayer for State Missions Posters
- Janie Chapman Offering Envelopes

Copies of the materials listed above can be obtained by calling South Carolina WMU at (800) 723-7242 (in South Carolina) or (803) 765-0030 (Columbia only), ext. 8500 or by e-mail: wmu@scbaptist.org. All of these materials have been mailed to churches. You can also find these materials and other supplemental materials on the South Carolina WMU website at www.scwmu.org.

1. Read *Infusion*.
2. Pray for guidance as you prepare and lead this season of prayer. Pray for those who will participate.
3. Obtain resource items needed. If your church has none of the materials listed on the previous page, contact state WMU at the phone number or e-mail address in "For more information . . .", item #C, page 8.
4. Study the plan for your age-level.
5. Gather resources and materials for each activity.
6. Enlist others to assist you.
7. Make copies of the Allocations for the 2008 Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education, and Empowering Kingdom Growth (EKG) for participants. It is found on the back of the South Carolina State Facts sheet.
8. Promote. Contact all WMU members and the churchwide audience. Contact parents of preschoolers and children. Use church newsletter, worship bulletins, bulletin boards, and telephone. Include date, time, and place of event.

ADULTS

Valerie Gargiulo, WMU Director, Chesterfield Baptist Association, writer

Preparation: These procedures may be used for a Season of Prayer for all adults on a Sunday, Wednesday, or another time, for a Women on Mission® or Adults on Mission™ meeting. Choose congregational hymns and special music from those listed in the *Leaders Guide*. Request and use the special envelopes for the Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education, and Empowering Kingdom Growth. Read the general procedures for advanced preparation. Read the "Procedures for All Ages." Read the procedures below and prepare for chosen activities and visuals. Enlist volunteers to present the material in each section by summarizing key information, role playing, mock interviews, or other creative methods.

Introduction: Prepare and display sentence strips with: 1) the definition of infusion - "a pouring in of something that gives new life or significance," 2) "77% or about 3 million people in our state do not attend church regularly," and 3) "South Carolina = A Great Mission Field." Share information from the study, read the scripture, and call attention to the sentence strips. Lead in a prayer for God to infuse us with His love for the lost and to open our hearts to creative ways to reach out to them.

Infusion through Community Ministries: Obtain a copy of the map showing South Carolina associations and enlarge it. (See *South Carolina Baptist Convention, 2007-08 Directory and Calendar, Church Staff Edition*, page 56.) Mount it on poster board. Outline the associations featured in the study. Call on enlisted volunteers to role play interactions between Community Ministry volunteers and clients featured in the study. (They should highlight the stories in the study, show the volunteer sharing a Bible and tract, praying with the client, etc.) State that God is faithful to send volunteers at just the right time and ask, "Are we faithful to respond as volunteers when He sends us?" Lead in prayer for community ministries.

Infusion through Fair Ministry: Locate a picture of a fair (magazine, newspaper, online, etc.). Mount the picture and display it on the poster of South Carolina associations. Draw an arrow to Saluda association. Ask the group to brainstorm types of workers at a fair. Introduce the volunteer to share about this ministry, saying; "Now (enlisted volunteer) will share with us ways this association is ministering to fair workers." After information has been shared, lead in prayer for fair ministries.

Infusion through a Homeless Ministry: Give each person present an index card with these two numbers printed on it: 6,759 and 1,329. Share the significance of these two numbers as you are sharing information from this section. Remind participants that each person represented by these numbers has a face. Challenge participants to look for/at the homeless. Recognize the faces and the needs – physical and spiritual – behind the faces. Challenge them to look for ways to minister to the homeless in their community. Lead in prayer for this ministry.

Infusion through Prison Ministry: Ask attendees who have helped provide prisoner packets for prison ministry to raise their hands. Then ask the group to brainstorm other ways to reach out to prisoners and their families. Call on the enlisted volunteer to share information. Lead in prayer for prison ministries featured in the study and in your community.

Conclusion: Summarize ways presented in this study to reach out and minister to the lost. Share the challenge to reach out to people who are waiting for the infusion of God's love in our communities. Lead in a closing prayer.

YOUTH

Cathy Mixon and Jerry Blaxton, Sand Hill Baptist Church, Varnville, writers

Teaching Aims: Youth will 1) learn about missions in South Carolina, 2) be encouraged to pray for missions in South Carolina, and 3) be challenged to support missions through the Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education, and Empowering Kingdom Growth.

Before the Session:

- Read Season of Prayer material.
- Fold a sheet of construction paper in half. Place "Praying Hands" at the fold and trace the hands. Cut it out, leaving the fold intact, so the hands are connected. Make enough for each participant.
- Make a Dart Board-Balloon Game. Cut a 4' x 4' square of plywood. Blow up balloons. Write facts from the fair ministry story on small strips of paper and attach these and the balloons to the board. Add some strips that contain silly challenges for youth to do, such as, "Sing 'Yankee Doodle' in Pig Latin," "Say the alphabet backwards," etc. Have metal-tipped darts available. (Option: Put the facts/challenges in balloons and let the youth stomp the balloons.)
- Pack-a-Box Race. Gather pairs of as many of the following items as you can: cardboard boxes, suit of clothes, canned goods, boxed foods, fruit, paper money, baby diapers, empty medicine bottles, textbooks and Bibles. Secure a scale.
- Draw a simple home floor plan on poster board; include and label, a bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, den and closet. Cut the rooms apart to make a puzzle. Place information about homeless ministry on the back of the puzzle.

YOUTH PROCEDURES (Continued)

During the Session:

Open with prayer that God will help youth see the need to reach people for Christ in our state. As each story is presented lead youth to write prayer requests on their praying hands outline.

Take turns at the Dart Board-Balloon Game. Allow each youth to throw darts until a balloon is popped. Read the slip of paper. If it is a fact about the story, give details from the information provided, or allow youth to perform the challenge. Continue until all the facts and challenges are done. Be sure to take precautions to prevent injury. No youth or adult should be near the board when a dart is thrown.

Divide the items collected for Pack a Box evenly and place on two tables. Use the items as visual aids to share the information about the Ministry Centers. Then form two teams. Each team has two minutes to see how many items they can pack into their box. Judge the winner by how many items are remaining or weigh the boxes.

Begin with the puzzle of the home put together. Lead youth to discuss their favorite thing about each room in their home. One at a time, remove a room and ask, "What would you miss, or how would your life be if that room were not a part of your home?" Allow youth to respond. When the last room has been removed, ask: "What do you think your life would be like if you were homeless?" Share the information on the back of each puzzle piece about ministry with the homeless.

Remind students to give to the Janie Chapman State Missions Offering and close in prayer for the missions work in South Carolina.

CHILDREN

Debby Akerman, Girls in Action Consultant, Waccamaw Baptist Association, writer

Teaching Aims: Children will have (1) knowledge of missions work in South Carolina that "infuses" hurting people with the love and hope of Jesus, (2) an understanding that God calls people to do their part for Him, and (3) a desire to support missions by praying and giving.

Desired Outcome: Children will be open to praying for and giving to South Carolina missions work. Children will be involved in mission action projects that will infuse hurting and hopeless people in the community with the love and hope of Jesus.

Preparation:

- Set up two areas, one for each of the following ministries.
 - a. **Fair Ministry:** Set up the entrance way to a fair with ticket booth, flags, balloons, music, and signs for rides, food, and games.
 - b. **Homeless Ministry:** Set up an area with artificial trees, shrubs and flowers to represent Finlay Park. Add a bench and a trash can filled with "clean" trash. To the wall, attach a background of city buildings drawn on large sheets of paper.
- Enlist two adults to portray Jim Evatt, Church and Community Ministries Director for Saluda Association and Allen Tipping, Midtown Fellowship's community missions pastor for the two mission stations. Give each person a copy of their story.
- Gather needed items for activities at each mission station.
- Prepare testimonies to be read on 3 x 5 cards.
- Make a Bible verse poster with the scripture, I Corinthians 9:23 (NLV).
- Procure Janie Chapman Missions Offering Envelopes.

Leading the Study

Missions Discovery: (20 minutes) Children will visit two mission stations, spending nine to ten minutes at each. Divide children between the two stations as they arrive. Use a whistle when it is time for children to switch to the second station.

1. Fair Ministry
 - a. The person portraying Jim Evatt will talk for three or four minutes about the fair ministry from the mission story.
 - b. Children will experience filling a "lunch box" or a "hygiene kit" for fair workers by cutting out lunch items and/or hygiene items from newspaper ads and magazines and gluing them into small boxes. Children can write a Bible verse on their box. They will take home the box to remind them to pray for the Fair Ministry.
 - c. Give children fair food like fried dough or caramel apples.
2. Homeless Ministry
 - a. The person portraying Allen Tipping will talk for three or four minutes about the "Homeless for the Homeless" project from the mission story.
 - b. Ask each child to pick an item from the trash can and think about why that thrown away item would be "picked" out of the trash and used by a homeless person. Ask the children to share their answers. Suggested trash items: socks, tin pie plate, McDonalds bag with leftover food, torn sweatshirt, half a bottle of coke, old hat, dirty blanket, old shoes, large cardboard box, etc.

Missions Application: (25 minutes) Gather children together in one area.

1. Open session with prayer;
2. Song – Lead children to sing "When I Pray";
3. Bible Verse – "Everything I do, I do to get the Good News to men. I want to have a part in this work." I Corinthians 9:23 (NLV). Have children read the verse together. Discuss our part in praying for missions.

CHILDREN'S PROCEDURES (Continued)

4. Fair Ministry
 - a. Testimony: Assign a child to read the following testimony:
"My name is Janet Atkin. I assist Jim Evatt with the fair ministry. When I began helping him, I was afraid of the fair workers because many were addicted to drugs and alcohol. I prayed about this and the Lord took away my fear by saying to me "Touch them; they're real; they need Me." That opened my heart to them."
 - b. Application: Ask "Is it normal to be a little bit afraid to help people who are different than we are?" Assure children it is normal at first. Ask: "What did Janet Atkin do when she felt afraid?" and "How did God help her?"
5. Homeless Ministry
 - a. Testimony: Assign a child to read the following testimony:
"My name is Linda. I have been homeless for two months. I never thought I would not have a home. I lost my job at K Mart and then could not pay my rent. I have no family and nowhere to go. Every night I have to find a place to sleep. Sometimes I sleep on a bench in the park. When it gets cold I walk across the city to a homeless shelter. I have to look for food every day. I eat at a soup kitchen or I find left over food in trash cans. I wish I could get another job but no one wants to hire homeless women. I think God has forgotten about me."
 - b. Application: Ask the children how they felt when they heard Linda's story. Ask the children what are needs that homeless people like Linda have. List these on a large poster board. Tell about a way your church or association is helping the homeless or think of ways your church can help the homeless.
6. Prayer
 - a. Ask the children to name people and needs for which each can pray from today's missions experience.
 - b. Ask children to take turns praying.
7. Give out offering envelopes explaining how children can give to the Janie Chapman Offering that supports missions in South Carolina.

Missions Response Activity: (15 minutes) Divide the children into two or three groups. Leaders will guide the children to plan a mission action project to help hurting and hopeless people. Example: local homeless shelter or food distribution center or a local event such as a marathon, parade, or fair where children can go to give out free cups of water and/or other items. Give these plans to Girls in Action®, Children in Action™ or other children's leaders.

PRESCHOOL

Lynn Glisson, Mission Friends Consultant, Kershaw Baptist Association, writer

Concept Areas: Community (Fair Ministry), Jesus, Bible

Teaching Aims: Preschoolers will learn (1) that there are many people around us who have never read from the Bible and heard that God loves them, (2) that by meeting the needs of these people we can show them God's love, and (3) that by giving to and praying for state missions personnel, they can help meet those needs.

Bible Thoughts: "Be kind to each other." (Ephesians 4:32), "Do not forget to do good and to share with others." (Hebrews 13:16), "Jesus went about doing good." (Acts 10:38), "Jesus said, "I love you." (John 15:9), "The Bible tells us about Jesus (2 Timothy 3:16), "All that the Bible says is from God." (2 Timothy 3:16).

Preparation:

- 1) Pray for God's guidance as you prepare this material for the preschoolers you will be teaching.
- 2) Read the 2008 *Leaders Guide*.
- 3) List materials needed for Interest Areas; collect and prepare materials.
- 4) Plan and gather snack items, posting allergy alert for parents.

Greeting: As preschoolers arrive, hand each one a "Ticket to the Fair" you have prepared with a place for their name on the front and the Bible verse, "Be kind to each other." (see Ephesians 4:32), on the back. Greet them, writing their name on the ticket and guide them to one of the planned activities.

Homeliving or Art: Prepare Lunches for Fair Workers

Materials: Paper lunch bags, 4x6 no line index cards, construction paper, crayons and glue. (Optional: Foam stickers in various shapes)

Directions: In advance, cut various shapes out of different colors of construction paper. Give each child two index cards to represent the bread for a sandwich. Let them choose different shapes and also use crayons to create their sandwich. Circles can be used to create cookies. Let each child prepare a lunch and place it in the lunch bag along with Christian tracts, if available. Tell them how the volunteers from churches provide sandwiches and cookies for the workers at the fair and share with them God's love. Read the Bible verse, "Do not forget to do good and to share with others." (see Hebrews 13:16)

Games and Manipulatives: Merry-Go-Round Musical Chairs

Materials: "Child-size" chairs, music CD and CD player.

Directions: Place chairs in a circle, one for each child in your classroom. Play music as the children go around the circle of chairs. When the music stops, they each sit in a chair. Talk about going to the fair and riding the merry-go-round. Talk about the volunteers who show God's love to the migrant workers who set up the carnival rides at the fair.

PRESCHOOL PROCEDURES (Continued)

Nature: Sounds and Smells of the Fair

Materials: Containers, unpopped corn and popped corn.

Directions: Talk with preschoolers about the sounds and smells of the fair. Show them the unpopped and popped corn you have placed in containers. Let them touch and smell both. Older preschoolers can taste the popped corn.

Books: Gather different Bibles, one in Spanish if available. Place them around the room. In each Bible mark a suggested Bible Thought. Ask the children to try and find Bibles in the room. As they find a Bible, talk about that Bible and tell them that not everyone has a Bible or has ever seen a Bible. There are many kinds of Bibles for many kinds of people. Read the marked verse.

Group Time: Share with the preschoolers about the Fair Ministry of the Saluda, Pickens-Twelve Mile, Palmetto and Piedmont Associations.

Mission Story: Do you get excited when you hear the fair is coming to town? It's fun to ride the rides and eat all the tasty foods at the fair. It takes a lot of people to take care of the rides and cook the food. Many of those workers have very little money, do not have a warm place to sleep or food to eat. They have never heard about Jesus or read the Bible. Mr. Jim Evatt of the Saluda Association and many other volunteers from many churches go to the fair to help these workers. The volunteers serve lunch of sandwiches, cookies and drinks to the workers and give them blankets, clothes and medical supplies. But the best thing of all is they give them Bibles and tell them about Jesus and how he loves them. Many of the workers learn that Jesus can be their friend and make their life better. The workers at the fair give the volunteers cotton candy to say thank you.

Prayer time: Have children wash their hands and get ready for snack. After children are seated, have a prayertime before eating. Pray that more volunteers will come to help at the fair and that many fair workers will learn about Jesus. Pray for Jim Evatt and all missionaries in South Carolina and for the Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education, and Empowering Kingdom Growth.

Snack: Caramel Apples and Apple Juice

Needed: Apple slices and caramel dip. Use packaged caramel dip or prepare dip with one (14 ounce) package individually wrapped caramels, unwrapped, and two tablespoons milk. In microwave melt caramels with milk. Let cool briefly.

Special Take-Home Ideas: Send home individual small bags of cotton candy (if available) along with the "Ticket to the Fair" each child received when they arrived. Tell them to share what they learned with friends and family. Encourage the children to save money in their lunch bags from the homeliving or art activity for State Missions.

For more information . . .

- A) Invite a state missions speaker to your church. See the 2008 State Missions Speakers Bureau (sent to Pastors and WMU directors) or contact Sandra Tapp, Woman's Missionary Union, SCBC; in SC, at (800) 723-7242, ext. 8524; or (803) 765-0030.
- B) Have members read *Infusion*, in *The Baptist Courier*, August 21, 2008. The information can also be found on the South Carolina WMU website at www.scwmu.org and the South Carolina Baptist Convention website at www.scbaptist.org.
- C) Obtain resources. Order forms for free resources: posters, prayer guides, *Family Missions Page* and Janie Chapman Offering for State Missions, Missions Education, and Empowering Kingdom Growth envelopes were sent to WMU directors. The *Churchwide Observance*, clip art page, *Family Missions Page* and *South Carolina State Missions Facts* were also mailed to the WMU directors. A DVD was sent to each church. It was included in the *September – October 2008 WMU Leadership Packet* to WMU Directors or to the pastors of churches who do not have a WMU director. If you do not have these resources, ask your WMU director to contact state WMU; in SC (800) 723-7242, ext. 8500; or (803) 765-0030 or e-mail: wmu@scbaptist.org. If your church does not have a WMU director, call the state WMU office directly.

Endnotes

¹ Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

² Writer's Packet (SCBC)

³ Interview with Margaret Wilson

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Interview with Wynette Miller

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Interview with Jim Evatt

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Interview with Janet Atkin

¹⁶ Interview with Jim Evatt

¹⁷ South Carolina Council on Homelessness

¹⁸ Writer's Packet (SCBC)

¹⁹ Interview with Allen Tipping

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Interview with Bill Dieckmann

²³ Department of Corrections

²⁴ Writer's Packet (SCBC)