



HEART4SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER



I AM WHO I AM

I think it is safe to say that most of us have had a moment when we knew God was calling us to join Him in His redemptive work. Whether we are leading a church, serving a local school, caring for our family, or ministering to a neighbor, we are responding to God's call on our life.

These "callings" come with challenges. We can probably all relate to Moses as he stood at the burning bush and told God that he didn't measure up to the task. In that moment, I think there were some things Moses could not comprehend:

- God had prepared and equipped Moses through his upbringing in the palace and his years as a shepherd in the desert.
- God would provide every resource needed for this task.
- God would go with him every step of the journey.

God has done and will do the same in our lives. We have been prepared and equipped. He will provide needed resources in His time, and He will never leave us or forsake us. Paul reminds us, "God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

As Moses continued to express his doubts and concerns, he asked who he should tell the Israelites had sent him. God replied, "I AM WHO I AM... I AM has sent me to you". Our God has always been and will always be. He is our Creator and Sustainer. He is Sovereign over our circumstances. He is Faithful. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Bread of Life.

Where do you need encouragement today? When you think you are not enough, know that God is enough. He is all that you need. "Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

Angela McNeal

Looking Ahead

April 13 - Informational Luncheon with the Aiken Baptist Association

April 25 - Waccamaw Baptist Associational Training

April 27 - Ridge Baptist Associational Training

REGIONAL FALL TRAININGS:

UPSTATE

September 7 in Anderson at Saluda Baptist Association Building

MIDLANDS

September 14 in Columbia (location TBA)

PEE DEE AREA

September 21 in Florence at Grace Baptist Church

LOW COUNTRY

October 12 at Centerpoint Church at Remount

School Partnerships: Where Do I Begin?

- Pray! Seek God's guidance in choosing a school and pray for an open door with administration.
- Contact the school principal by phone or email. Ask to make an appointment and let them know the purpose of the meeting.
- Be patient. Principals have a lot on their plates. Recognize that it will take time to build trust and let them know you are there for them with no other agenda. If you are having trouble connecting, drop off a personal note explaining that you would like to meet to discuss how you can help. Include a special treat with the note.
- When you meet, share your appreciation of their work and acknowledge the challenges of the last few years. Be ready to connect and listen. Do not assume you know their needs.
- Ask, "How can we help?"
- If the principal is taken by surprise and doesn't have an answer, ask, "Is there some way we can encourage your teachers?" or "What are some student needs we can help with?"
- Under promise and overdeliver. Know your limitations and always follow through.
- Consider serving on the School Improvement Council. Community members are needed. You will hear about school needs and creative ways to serve.
- Plan to connect on a consistent basis (every few weeks) to check in for support, encouragement, and to continue asking how you might help.

For more ideas, support, and resources, visit our
website: www.Heart4Schools.org
or email angelamcneal@scbaptist.org.



Student Needs

- Reading Buddies (reading once a week for 30 minutes with a student throughout the year)
- Mentoring or serving as a Lunch Buddy weekly or monthly
- Food on the weekends for the food-insecure
- Snacks and healthy food for the school "pantry"
- Clothes to be kept in the office in case of an accident or need for a change
- Personal hygiene items; school supplies; warm clothes

Encouraging Teachers

- Write personal notes of encouragement.
- Provide snacks and a note in the teacher workroom.
- Purchase classroom supplies for teachers and students.
- Provide breakfast or lunch; serve teachers and make intentional connections.
- Support first-year teachers with classroom help, supplies, and consistent encouragement.
- Church members can "adopt" a teacher and provide ongoing support throughout the year. (Put names on an "angel tree".)
- Provide a "duty-free" lunch to teachers by sitting with their class while they eat in another location.
- Volunteer in the front office, guidance counselor's office, or library.
- Help with bulletin boards, Fun Run, Field Day, reading incentives, or family engagement nights.
- Offer the use of your building for special events.

Better Together Spring Celebration - March 23, 2023



As a follow-up to our Better Together Heart4Schools Training, churches returned to a Spring Celebration on March 23, 2023. This was a special time of worship, sharing testimonials, celebrating God's work in our partnerships and encouraging one another.



We also heard from Dr. Sal Minolfo, who shared the value of school partnerships from an administrator's perspective. Suzanne Snyder, LPC, Mental Health Program Manager for SC Department of Education helped us better understand mental health needs of students. Did you know: 1 in 5 teens experience a mental health condition and half of all mental health conditions begin by the age of 14? There are many ways we can support our students. Email angelamcneal@scbaptist.org to learn more.

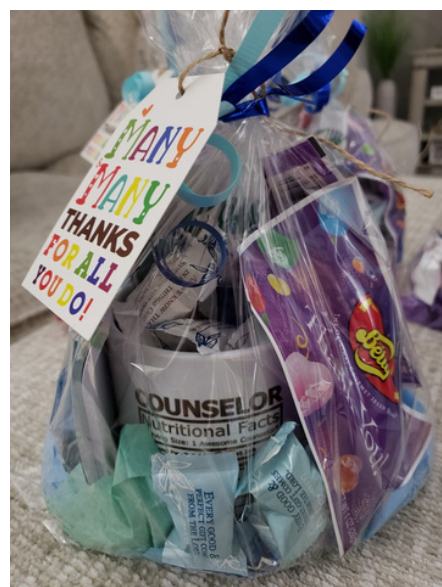
Plan to attend a regional Heart4Schools training this fall and be a part of the next Spring Celebration in 2024!



APRIL SCHOOL APPRECIATION DAYS

April 4 - School Librarian Appreciation Day
 April 3-7 - National Assistant Principal Week
 April 5 - Paraprofessional Appreciation Day
 April 17-21 - National Volunteer Recognition Week
 April 25 - School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
 April 26 - National Administrative Professionals Day

Join the Heart4Schools Facebook Group and let us know your plans to serve and bless these groups.



River Springs Baptist Church in Irmo did a great job of blessing their school counselors in February!

To see what other churches are doing around the state, click on this link to join the Heart4Schools Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/668426640367123/>

or go to our website: www.heart4schools.org to join.



Since this is a private group, you will be asked to share your church name and the name of the school you serve.

Looking for ways to enlist volunteers?



Camden First Baptist Church held a Ministry Fair in which their Heart4Schools Team shared the many ways church members could be involved in their partnership with the Continuous Learning Center. Church members signed up to volunteer in their areas of interest. This was a great way to recruit new volunteers!

This idea - and many others - are available in the Facebook group.

Brainstorming

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 1-5!

✓ Ask my principal how I can best show appreciation this week. Would any of these ideas work at my school? Which ideas fit my resources?

- ☆ • Get a list of teachers/staff. Put names on a board for church members to choose a name. Place notecards on a table near the board and ask church members to write a note to one of the teachers (leave it in a box on the table) and pray for that teacher.
- ☆ • Provide a gift bag with chocolates, pens, post-its, lotion and a gift card. (Are there community businesses that might help contribute the gift cards?)
- ☆ • Host a Teacher Appreciation breakfast or lunch for teachers with a party theme. Would we need volunteers to watch students - or is there a better day when students are off?
- ☆ • Provide volunteers for a "Duty Free" lunch.
- ☆ • Take a cart of treats room to room for each teacher. They could have a "menu" the week before and choose their favorite drink or snack.
Ideas: Coffee, tea, soda, water, donut, bagel, energy bar or fruit
- ☆ • Snacks in the breakroom with notes of encouragement from our staff. What about an apple bar, waffle bar, or a dessert bar for something different?
- ☆ • Put special treats in their box ... maybe a candy bar or snack bar with a cute note. Check out Pinterest and Etsy for ideas!

M&M's
Marvelous & Magnificent

Ministry Spotlight: FBC Camden Camden, South Carolina

Dr. Rusty Shuler, Pastor

Nancy Kalutz, Heart4Schools Coordinator

A Year of Serving Students

First Baptist Church of Camden has been serving Continuous Learning Center since 2018. Nancy Kalutz, Heart4Schools Coordinator, recently shared a testimonial of a new mentoring program at the Better Together Spring Celebration. This spotlight shares "the rest of the story".

Like other churches during the pandemic, FBC focused on teachers and providing much needed support. As doors began to open, they made a conscious decision to focus on students this year. They have done this in a variety of ways!

The year began with a prayer walk through the schools. Each semester they have helped students prepare for a field trip - and chaperoned the trips as well. At Christmas, in preparation for a trip to a local nursing home and assisted living center, they taught students how to arrange flowers in vases. They went along with the students to deliver flowers to individual residents, visit, share cards, and sing Christmas carols. Students were asked to return to the center for Valentine's Day to help residents decorate cookies. FBC Camden volunteers were happy to join them!



The church provides a Pizza Party at the end of each 9 weeks for students who make honor roll. They also host a monthly birthday table for students. Nancy says there are many who would otherwise not be recognized on their birthday.

As students completed a Conservation Study, FBC Camden members collected many items to be used for the creation of a large mural. They went a step further and helped with the bottle cap mosaic!

Volunteers have had a great impact on students as they have served as mentors this year. Kim Stokes, CLC Special Projects Coordinator, developed a mentoring program that allowed 15 church members to each meet with one student for 30 minutes a week. This was a time to build relationships and give the students a place to share. As volunteers and students chatted, some played games, put puzzles together, tossed a football, or worked on academics if there was an area of struggle. One of the volunteers worked alongside a student to build a lending library. The church then filled it with books for the students and community. Mentoring has provided great opportunities to make an investment in the lives of their students.



Ministry Spotlight: FBC Jackson Jackson, SC

Brian Henderson, Pastor

Ashley Brittain, Heart4Schools Volunteer

Serving School Nurses

When Brian Henderson became the pastor of FBC Jackson and began to talk about serving their local middle school, Ashley Brittain knew one important way they could serve. As a former middle school nurse at this school, she had a great understanding of the student needs these nurses were addressing. Schools don't typically have a budget for health or social needs of students. Ashley says, "It takes the community to help support the school system when it comes to those types of needs. For a school that's a little over 300 students, as a school nurse, I got \$36 to stock my health room to take care of those kids — \$36. I found that several months I was spending more than I was making as a school nurse to take care of these kids. So, when our pastor brought this program to our church, I was like, 'I know where we can serve. We need to serve the school nurse.'"

As a result, FBC Jackson created a care closet for the middle school. They bought a mobile cabinet and asked each Sunday School Class to bring a certain supply. They had a competition between classes with each collecting different items: female deodorant, male deodorant, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, hairbrushes, hair ties, feminine products, and body wipes. As a result of their relationships with the school, the school nurse has been comfortable calling and sharing new needs. The latest need has been girls' underwear. The nurse has been very appreciative of the church's support and the way they have provided for the basic needs of their middle schoolers.

Pastor Brian Henderson says this partnership began two years ago. The first year was about building relationships, and this year the doors have been "wide open". The WMU group provides a breakfast or lunch meal for teachers about every 45 days. They try to do this on a workday so that teachers can enjoy the time to eat together. Volunteers provide duty-free lunches throughout the year. Various groups in the church serve: WMU, the Men's Group, and Sunday School Classes. The church has done a lot to help work on the school grounds; led a campaign to purchase t-shirts for every student; and stocked the school's canteen to kick off the year. Their Music and Youth Pastor meets at the school on a weekly basis to provide support to the band and choir teacher. Because of the relationship built with the church, the school is comfortable with asking for help. When a tractor trailer full of fruit arrived for the band fund-raiser, they called and asked for help with unloading. Brian and a group of men from FBC Jackson were happy to help!



Mark Your Calendar

Heart4Schools Regional Trainings

UPSTATE

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Saluda Baptist Association Building

MIDLANDS

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Each training will be from 10 am - 2 pm and include lunch.

Attendees will hear from a panel of speakers sharing their experience in serving local schools. There will be time to network and learn from each other as well. Whether you are new to school partnerships, trying to reengage your school after the pandemic, or simply wanting new ideas, this training is for you!

Registration will begin in May. More information to come!



(Right to left) Mentoring: FBC Camden, Nancy Kalutz
New Partnerships: FBC Pickens, Robbie Twieto
Reading Buddies: Cornerstone, Brett Gandy
Serving School Nurses: FBC Jackson, Ashley Brittain
International Teachers: Davidson Street, Kenny Moore
Perserverance: Deer Park, Cindy Watts



Visit www.scbaptist.org/stories to hear the stories of these Heart4Schools leaders.

If you would like to talk about partnership opportunities or challenges, connect with others in your community serving local schools, or provide training for your volunteers, contact angelamcneal@scbaptist.org or call 803-227-6079.

Check out Heart4Schools resources at www.heart4schools.org.

