

# The Informer

February/2026

What's happening this month

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*A family devoted to  
the Word, to Worship, to the  
Fellowship, & to the Ministry  
of the Gospel*

## STAFF

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REV. BLAIR M. SMITH,  
Senior Pastor

REV. CALEB BARTLETT  
Associate Pastor

REV. ANDY STOKES  
Worship Pastor

DYLAN JACOBS  
Youth Leader

PAIGE YOUMANS  
Children's Director

PATTY HAMPTON  
Ministry Assistant

COLE HANCOCK  
Pianist

# FROM YOUR PASTOR

## Families in the Family of God

*13And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. 14But you say, "Why does He not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. 16"For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless." - Malachi 2:13-16*

There is a reason God is our Father. There is a specialness to the relationship between God the Father and God the Son that is revealed in the family dynamic. According to Ephesians 5 the purpose of marriage is to illustrate the greatest love — Jesus' love for His bride, the church. Marriage and family are not simply convenient structures God implements; it is something deeper. And so, there is something special about our family relationships, and all families are founded on what? Husband and wife.

At the end of this month, we have a marriage conference, and I have designed it to be a blessing to any couple in any season. If you are newlyweds with no problems, if you are a younger couple with every problem and not many solutions, if you are an older couple with every solution but no problems to face together, or if you are in a season of no issues... this conference is for you. This conference is meant to strengthen our church, our prayers, our faithfulness by strengthening the relationship that affects all the other relationships.

Lindsey and I have been married for (\*does math on fingers\*) 14 years and know a lot about what the Bible says about marriage; but we need this conference. We need to hear what Dr. Hollingsworth has to share. We need to be with other couples sharing God's work in our life. We need to hear their success and maybe they need to hear ours. Maybe you don't need to go for you, maybe you need to go because another couple needs you and you don't know it yet.

So, for the strengthening of our church, for the sake of our prayers, and for the growth of the kingdom... sign up. Don't miss this opportunity. Sign up via the link or call the office. We're going to have a GREAT time!

Link: <https://forms.gle/D1uSHtarcbfAmCdo8>

in Christ's love,  
- Blair

Love Jesus. Love One Another.



7068 Nursery Rd.  
Columbia, SC 29212



803-781-1345



[www.firstbaptistirmo.org](http://www.firstbaptistirmo.org)

## Attendance

	Sunday School	Worship
1/4/2025	133	181
1/11/2025	141	211
1/18/2025	139	188
1/25/2025	0	175*

\*Online Views



Last Month...

## Finances

Budget Contributions	\$ 49,330.07
Budget Distributions	\$ 63,647.04
Restricted Contributions	\$ 13,120.45
Restricted Distributions	\$ 19,345.81

Contributions statements for 2025 were mailed on January 22, 2026. If you did not receive your statement, or if there is an issue with your statement, please contact the church office.

New  
Members

No New  
Members

# MARRIAGE CONFERENCE

*back to basics*

a time for couples of ALL ages & in ANY season

Led by **Dr. Gary Hollingsworth**  
with his wife **Gwen**

**February 27-28** | Family Life Center  
Friday 6:30pm | Saturday 9:00am

**\$40 Per Couple**

Includes Supper on Friday Night  
& Breakfast on Saturday Morning  
**FREE GIVEAWAYS !!**

*Sign-up online or  
contact the church office*



## FRIDAY

6:00pm

Doors Open/Registration

6:30pm

Supper/Entertainment

7:30pm

Session 1

8:30pm

Closing Prayer

## SATURDAY

8:00am

Doors Open  
Breakfast/Coffee

9:00am

Session 2

9:45am

BREAK

10:00am

Session 3

11:30am

Closing Prayer

**\$5**  
Under 7  
Free

# CHILI COOK-OFF!

**FEBRUARY 8**  
CHILI COOK-OFF 5 PM

**PLEASE BRING A POT  
OF YOUR FAVORITE CHILI OR  
SOUP BY 4:30PM**

Everything else is Provided!

Presented by:  
Men's Ministry and Missions & Ministry

If interested in judging,  
contact Austin Hall

**Categories:**  
BEEF CHILI  
CHICKEN CHILI  
UNIQUE SOUP

**1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE**

**VOTE FOR THE BEST CHILI**

**FOOTBALL WILL BE SHOWN ON THE BIG SCREEN**

All proceeds go to mission trips.

**Come Join Us!**

# DIVORCE Care

Coming soon

## Support Group

Divorce Care is a 13 week Christian support group for people to guide them on the path of recovery after separation or divorce.

# Ministry Updates



## **Wednesday Night Dinner**

Dinner begins at 5:15 in the FLC. The price is \$8 for adults and children 12 and under eat free (no take-outs) with a max family cost of \$30. Please reserve your place by noon on the Monday before by calling the church office @ 803-781-1345, or signing up in your Bible Study class. Tickets will be handed out upon arrival.

February 4 – Sloppy Joes, Green Beans, Chips, Dessert

February 11 – Hot Dogs, Chili, Baked Beans, Slaw, Chips, Dessert

February 18 – Chicken Nuggets , Mac n Cheese, Green Beans, Dessert

February 25 – Sub Sandwiches, Pasta Salad, Chips, Dessert

## **AMAZING GRAYS LUNCHEON**



Wednesday, February 4, 2025 - 11:30 am  
Bring a Covered Dish (meat provided) and a friend

Our program this month will be a concert by Eternal Harmony, a men's quartet. They will be singing some of our favorite "Southern Gospel Songs." It will be great to be together again (since we didn't have our lunch in January) for good food, great fellowship and a wonderful program. Invite a friend to join you.

# Ministry Updates

## Nursery Schedule

	<b>Sunday School (Babies)</b>	<b>Service (Babies)</b>
2/1/2025	Jennifer Branham and Heather White	Barbara and John Cooley
2/8/2025	Meme Firestone and Valda Stokes	Tim and Paige Youmans
2/15/2025	Sam and Debbie Austin	Brooks Criminger and Trina Spires
2/22/2025	Vicki Hall and Melissa Swofford	Amy Gambrell and Julie West

	<b>Service (Toddlers)</b>
2/1/2025	Autumn Parades and Veronica Watson
2/8/2025	Brandon and Karly Carter
2/15/2025	John and Robbin Smith
2/22/2025	Lisa and Olivia Dowden

\*Sunday School for Toddlers available in the preschool classroom

# Ministry Updates

## College/Youth Ministry



(not pictured: Deborah Atkinson, Mary-Kaitlyn Bartlett)

Our college and youth ministries had the opportunity to partner together and help serve at the Processing Center in Charlotte with Operation Christmas Child. Throughout this shift, our boxes were being sent to children in Madagascar as we processed over 30,000 boxes while we were there! Over 3.2 million boxes were processed throughout America and sent to various countries throughout the world.

We tracked a few boxes sent from First Baptist Irmo which went to Colombia and Guatemala! What an exciting opportunity to serve alongside brothers and sisters in Christ for the gospel message to be proclaimed throughout the entire world! Thanks to everyone who donated money, time, resources, and energy to send boxes so children can feel the love of God and hear how much God loves them! May the Lord bless the children and bless those who send the gospel forward!

# Ministry Updates

## Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry is excited to get the new year started off well by resuming our weekly children's activities:

- missions programs - Sundays at 5 PM
- music/choir programs - Sundays at 6 PM
- AWANA program - Wednesdays at 6 PM



**Sunday, February 8th:** the Children's Mission Programs – Mission Friends, Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action - will meet beginning at 4:30 pm to complete a group mission project. We will dismiss at 5:15 so children can join their families to attend the Chili Cook Off. Children's choirs will not be meeting on February 8th

To better serve our church families, we have also expanded our Nursery staffing to include Sunday and Wednesday evening services.

Looking forward, the Children's Ministry has scheduled the following churchwide/ community events, so please add them to your calendar. We welcome your support for these outreach opportunities whether in prayer, service, or both!

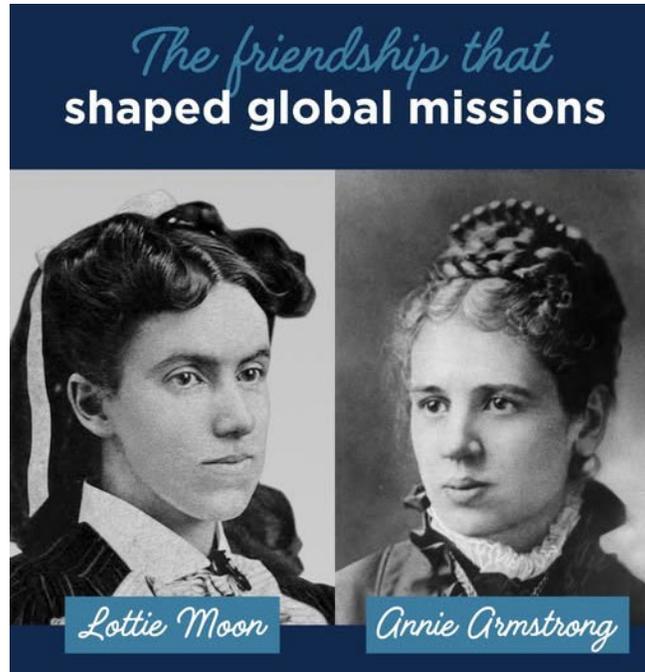
- Friday, March 6, 6-8:30 PM - Children's Event/ Parents' Night Out
- Saturday, April 4, 10 AM - Children's Easter Event
- June 15 - 19 - VBS "Illumination Station"

As always, thank you to each of the volunteers who have committed to actively serving in the children's ministry - without you these activities would not be possible. And thanks, as well, to our broader church family for your continued prayerful and loving support as we support the spiritual growth of the youngest among our church body.

# Ministry Updates

## Mission's Ministry

### Missions Giving Update



Did you know our North American and International missions' offerings have been linked arm-in-arm since the very beginning?

In 1887, a courageous woman named Lottie Moon stirred a movement of generosity for the sake of the nations. Serving in China, she boldly called on believers in America to join her in taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. One friend caught that vision in a significant way.

That friend? Annie Armstrong.

Annie wrote 1,000 letters, mobilizing churches and calling people across North America to pray, give and go.

Even after Lottie's death, Annie wasn't finished carrying her friend's torch. In 1918, she recommended that the "Christmas Offering for China" be renamed to honor Lottie's life and sacrifice that offering became the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering we still give to today, an offering that continues to fuel missionaries taking the gospel to the nations.

Two women. One gospel. A legacy that's still moving the mission forward. Last year, First Baptist Irmo was part of that story and contributed \$ to the Annie Armstrong March for State Missions and \$ to the Lottie Moon March for International Missions.

# Ministry Updates

## Mission's Ministry

### Monthly Budgeting Tips

Every month, we will be going over budgeting (financial) tips to have financial peace (Dave Ramsey).

Why do you want your finances in order? Are you tired of debt? Tired of living paycheck to paycheck? Want to have a good retirement?

We should plan and invest verses consuming. Use proven plans and systems (like using the Seven Baby Steps, budgets, emergency fund, investing 15 % for retirement, paying your house off, being generous, and using the debt snowball). Be consistent and focused.

Walk with the wise. What are the wise (millionaires) doing with their money? Have a yearly financial adviser for your investments.

Romans 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding except for the continuing debt to love (owe no one anything except to love).

Proverbs 21:5 The plans of the diligent lead to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty (do not be in a hurry on major financial decisions).

We are thinking about teaching a free Dave Ramsey Financial Peace class in the future. Let Bruce Pharis (803-730-3240) know if you are interested.

WMU



Have you ever wondered if you are root bound, dry rotted or when you will bloom? Join Women on Mission, Tuesday, February 10th at 11:00 am as we explore why the seeds, we plant are important. Darlene Wheeler and representatives from the Lexington Baptist Association women's team will be joining us as we roll up our sleeves and discover the importance of what we don't see happening beneath the soil. We look forward to seeing you at 11:00 am in Building 100.

# Ministry Updates

## Mission's Ministry

### February Mission Focus



#### **Why we partner with them:**

This ministry helps our community by providing food, financial assistance and clothing to those who are struggling and in dire need. This is a tangible way to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

#### **How you can help:**

- Pray for the food pantry to be fully stocked
- Pray for the struggling families and community
- Pray for gospel opportunities among the volunteers and the family's receiving assistance

#### **Serve:**

- They have onsite volunteer opportunities to help pack, sort, donate, etc.

If interested in serving, please contact  
Pastor Caleb (270) 313-9619 for more information!

# Member Birthdays in February



**1 – Barbara Burgess**  
**1 – Kevin Burgess**  
**1 – Debbie Austin**  
**3 – Luke Koneval**  
**4 – Nick Mathewes**  
**6 – Andrew Bedford**  
**8 – Kelly Watson**  
**9 – Dawn Cashatt**  
**10 – Cletus Criminger**  
**11 – Jo Hancock**  
**11 – Jacob Klutz**  
**12 – Bob Bartlett**

**19 – Collins Carter**  
**20 – Gordon Sparks**  
**20 – Bruce Pharis**  
**21 – Vicki Hall**  
**23 – Susie Channell**  
**23 – Chandler Huskey**  
**24 – Hugh Hancock**  
**25 – Gerald Spearman**  
**25 – Matthew Harrison**  
**26 – Diane Law**  
**26 – Julie West**  
**27 – Wendell Blanton**