

2023 MISSIONS STUDY

Statewide Goal: \$1,200,000

by Candace McIntosh, Alabama WMU Executive Director

Two hundred years ago, Alabama Baptists gathered together for the very first time “to promote missions, education and closer cooperation among Baptist churches in Alabama.” Coming together in cooperation for the cause of missions has always been at the heart of who we are as Alabama Baptists. Time has proven again and again that we can do more together.

The Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering, along with the Cooperative Program, plays a critical role in our efforts as Alabama Baptists to reach people with the saving message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's a way that every Alabama Baptist can participate in the Great Commission. And that's the unique thing about the Great Commission – none of us are called to be bench sitters. As believers, we are all first-string starters. We need to be ready for action whenever we are called upon. I encourage you to not just pray for and give to this offering, but to also consider how God may be calling you to personally serve through one of these Great Commission Ministries.

continued

**YOUR GIFTS HELP
SUPPORT THESE
GREAT COMMISSION
MINISTRIES:**



continued

Below are just a few ways God has moved because Alabama Baptists like yourself have been obedient to the call to further His Kingdom:

- Nearly 300 teenage students were given the opportunity to learn about global lostness, interact with missionaries directly, and consider the missionary calling through student events hosted by Alabama WMU.
- More than 800 disaster relief volunteers deployed to sites in Alabama, Kentucky and Florida, meeting the physical and spiritual needs of those they encountered. At least 40 known salvations were reported.
- Twenty-three church planters have been trained. Of those, 19 are Hispanic planters. God has been faithful to bring two men trained through this process to serve as trainers to others, ensuring future Hispanic church planting to fill the hunger for the Gospel among our Hispanic populations.
- A total of 176 Alabama Baptist congregations and their leadership have taken part in the "Empower" revitalization process, resulting in strengthened leaders, renewed churches and lives changed.
- Costs were covered for the transportation of many of the 14,336 Christmas Backpacks that Alabama Baptists provided to distribution sites. To date, 330 salvations have been reported.

Praise the Lord for how He is moving. There is much work still to be done. Across Alabama alone more than 2 million people are considered unchurched. As you look across our nation, that number increases to nearly 281 million, and across the world it is billions. How grateful we are that God is not only moving in the hearts of Alabama Baptists to reach the lost in our state but also calling them out to be the hands and feet of Jesus across our nation and world.

As you read this mission study and prepare to teach adults, teenagers, children and preschoolers about the work supported through their prayers and gifts, hold fast to the knowledge that you are building up and strengthening Christians who will live out the Great Commission through their prayers, gifts and going.

We remain grateful for the continued support of the Week of Prayer for State Missions and gifts given to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering. It has been a strong seven years, and, by God's grace, may Alabama Baptists move into the future with a firm commitment to seeing the Great Commission lived out. To God alone be all glory!

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR STATE MISSIONS

**Your gifts help
support these
Great Commission
Ministries:**

**ALABAMA WMU
DISASTER RELIEF
CHURCH PLANTING
PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS
CHURCH REVITALIZATION**



Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS



Myers-Mallory.org



PREPARATION FOR PASTORS & CHURCH MISSIONS LEADERS

GATHER missions leaders in your church (pastor, missions pastor, WMU director, etc.) for a time of prayer for state missions and for planning your churchwide Week of Prayer.

PLAN with your leadership team.

1. Set a date for your observance. Suggested dates are September 10-17, 2023. If those dates present a conflict for your church, feel free to choose another time. Set your church's offering goal. The statewide goal is \$1,200,000.

2. As a team, make a plan for promotion. Reserve space in church newsletters, on social media calendars, in worship service presentations and other outlets you plan to use for promotion. Visit Myers-Mallory.org/resources to explore the resources for the Week of Prayer and offering.

ORDER (see below) materials for churchwide distribution and for use in missions discipleship groups. Consult age-level leaders to determine their needs, and, if possible, submit one order for your church.

SOME OPTIONS FOR PROMOTION INCLUDE:

- Displaying posters throughout the church, distributing prayer guides, and placing envelopes in pews
- Utilizing one or more of the videos or graphics available at Myers-Mallory.org during worship services
- Enlisting a state missionary or Alabama WMU consultant to speak to your congregation or group
- Promoting on social media and in the church newsletter using graphics available at Myers-Mallory.org
- Using the activities in this study guide during missions discipleship gatherings like Mission Friends, Children in Action, GA, RA, Acteens, Women on Mission, etc. or during other discipleship times

Order free Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering materials by:

1. Ordering online at **Myers-Mallory.org**
2. Calling 334.613.2223 or 800.264.1225 ext. 2223
3. Emailing tfuller@alsbom.org

Activities for PRESCHOOLERS

In advance, read the Myers-Mallory Prayer Guide to familiarize yourself with the areas of ministry referenced below.

1. Welcome preschoolers as they arrive and encourage them to work together to build a church with blocks. Talk about your church – what it looks like on the outside and the inside. Explain that some people do not have a nice church building. A church in Alabama, First Baptist Tillman's Corner, shares its church building with a new church for Hispanic people so that they can have a place to worship together.

2. Gather children in a circle and show them a world map. Tell them about a girl from Alabama, Nicole*, who went to South Asia to be a missionary and tell people about Jesus. Point to Alabama and South Asia on the map. Talk about how far apart they are. Sometimes missionaries miss their home, family, church and friends. Churches in Alabama help Nicole: some pray for her, some send things she needs and some people go there to help her. Place the map on the floor and provide toy airplanes. Encourage preschoolers to pretend to fly to South Asia to help Nicole. **name changed to protect identity*

3. Show pictures of Disaster Relief volunteers (find images at Myers-Mallory.org/resources) Tell preschoolers these are people who go and help after there has been a storm. They help by picking up tree limbs or giving out food and water or praying with the people who were in the storm. Let preschoolers take turns trying on a yellow t-shirt and take a picture of each one to text to parents as a reminder to bring back their offering when it is due. Tell preschoolers: "Maybe one day you can help people after a storm and pray for them." Encourage each preschooler to draw a picture of himself or herself wearing a yellow shirt like the Yellow Shirt Army.

4. Encourage preschoolers to clean the tables and chairs in your classroom, using water and paper towels. Say: "We are helpers" (see 2 Corinthians 1:24). Sing together the following song to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?":

*We are helpers, we are helpers, yes we are,
yes we are. We can clean the tables, we can clean
the tables, yes, we can. Yes, we can!*

Remind preschoolers that they can be helpers just like the helpers who receive the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

5. Give each preschooler a tube of M&Ms.

*Make sure none of the preschoolers have food allergies first. Let preschoolers enjoy eating some of their M&Ms as they watch one of the videos at Myers-Mallory.org/resources. Tell preschoolers that Dr. Martha Myers and Kathleen Mallory, the ladies for whom the offering is named, loved God very much and wanted everyone to know about Jesus. Send a note home with each preschooler about the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering, asking families to fill their tubes with money and bring them back to church.

6. Make a thank-you card for Candace McIntosh, who is the leader of Alabama WMU. Show a picture of her to preschoolers (find at Myers-Mallory.org/resources). Say: "Miss Candace helps churches in Alabama learn about and pray for missionaries around the world." Draw a simple flower and help the preschoolers put their thumbprints in the petals, using a washable ink stamp pad. Mail the card to:

Candace McIntosh
Alabama WMU
P. O. Box 681970
Prattville, AL 36068

Before they leave, remind preschoolers and parents when to return their offering.

Activities for CHILDREN

In advance, read the Myers-Mallory Prayer Guide to familiarize yourself with the areas of ministry referenced below.

1. Christian Job Corps, a ministry of Alabama Woman's Missionary Union, teaches men and women job skills and life skills so they can earn a living and care for their families.

On a whiteboard or a large piece of craft paper, write the letters A– Z. Challenge children to work together to think of an occupation that begins with each letter (A for accountant, B for baker, C for coach, etc.). After they've written the occupations, choose a few to talk about. Discuss what skills would be needed for each job and how a person would learn those skills. Explain that CJC sites teach job skills and life skills, but they also teach people the most important thing they need to know – the hope they can find in Jesus. Pray together for Alabama's seven CJC sites, asking God to help them lead people to know Jesus. Pray that more churches and people will want to start CJC sites.

2. Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief trains people to help others who have been affected by disasters.

Share with children how ABDR has helped during recent disasters (sbdr.org/blog). In advance, write these words on separate sheets of yellow construction paper or index cards: administration, assessment, chainsaw, chaplaincy, clean up, communications, mass feeding, shower, laundry. Tell children that Disaster Relief workers are known as the Yellow Shirt Army – they wear yellow shirts so people know who they are. Place the sheets of paper on the floor or a table and guide children to toss a button or pebble towards the papers. When the child's button lands on a word, explain how that ministry helps and ask the children why it would be needed after a disaster (see sbdr.org/find-your-ministry for descriptions of each ministry). Pray as directed in the Prayer Guide Days 2 and 7.

3. In south Alabama, Brian Harper and Ramón Vielza (Prayer Guide Day 4) are working with pastors to plant Hispanic Baptist churches.

Share the video about I-10 Church (find at

Myers-Mallory.org/resources). Tell children that Southern Baptists are working together to plant churches in every community so every person can hear the Good News about Jesus. Spread a large sheet of craft paper on the floor or a tabletop. Direct the children to draw the streets of a town. Lead them to use blocks (or draw with markers) to place buildings in the town (school, hospital, police station, fire department, etc.). Place a church in the middle. As children create, discuss ways a church plant could minister to the people in each building.

4. There are about 400 missionaries with the International Mission Board and North American Mission Board who call Alabama home.

Scotty Goldman helps connect missionaries with churches who can support them. Gather objects a missionary might use in his or her ministry. Get creative –yes, they use a Bible, but they also use coffee, snacks, cleaning supplies, office supplies, sports equipment and other items to open the door to Gospel conversations! Before your session, place the items in brown paper lunch bags (one item per bag). Make enough bags for each child to get at least one object. Close the tops of the bags and place them on a table. Read the Day 5 story. Guide children to select a bag, sit in a circle and take turns opening the bags to reveal each object. Ask children to brainstorm how or why a missionary would use that object on the mission field.

5. Alabama Baptist churches want to be sure all their ministries are focused on sharing Jesus with everyone.

Rob Jackson helps churches know what they need to do to become stronger. Church revitalization starts with prayer. Lead your children on a prayerwalk around your church – as you visit each ministry area, guide children in how to pray for the leaders and for their ministry. Complete your prayerwalk by returning to your room and praying for First Baptist Church Florence, Rob Jackson and Baptist churches throughout Alabama (Prayer Guide Day 6).

Give children an offering envelope to take home. Remind them when to return their offering and to pray for the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

Activities for STUDENTS

In advance, read the Myers-Mallory Prayer Guide to familiarize yourself with the areas of ministry referenced below.

1. Explain the ministry of CJC to your group (see Prayer Guide Day 3).

Option One - A few weeks before the meeting, let your students know that you'll be going to a local thrift store to put together professional outfits for men and women (or just women if your group is all female) that are good quality and stylish. You can have each girl bring a small amount of money to purchase the items, or you can ask your church to fund the outing through either a love offering or from the budget. Once finished, bring the items back to the church for a fashion show amongst your group before donating the outfits to your local Christian Job Corps ministry (find sites at AlabamaWMU.org/cwjc).

Option Two - Ask your church family to donate new or gently used professional attire that your group will then organize and group together by size and type. Then, donate to your local Christian Job Corps ministry. Both options can be followed by a discussion about Christian Job Corps and the type of work they do for their communities.

2. Break your groups into pairs with each pair receiving a couple sheets of paper, a blindfold and a pen or pencil.

Blindfold one of the partners and ask them to draw their favorite animal for the other to guess. Switch, and repeat the process. Undoubtedly, guessing based on a blindfolded drawing was difficult, but that was often how it felt in the early days of Kathleen Mallory's ministry. Often, when she would travel by horse and buggy to churches in the hopes of discussing missions, she was met with resistance and opposition. She didn't know the way forward, but God continued to stir her heart towards missions education, and the blueprint for much of what we do today in WMU was born.

3. Using either actual cupcakes or just a set of candles secured in a strip of cardboard, place five regular birthday candles and one trick candle in front of your group.

Ask for volunteers to blow out

one candle at a time until only the trick candle is left. The final volunteer won't be able to blow it out. Explain that oftentimes churches fall into a rhythm of normal that needs some help to relight their fire for the Lord and their community. Using the trick candle, re-light the rest of the candles and read about First Baptist Church Florence in Prayer Guide Day 6 and the work God is doing there through church revitalization.

4. Using simple blank cards, enlist your students to help write notes of encouragement to missionary parents in Alabama.

Use the card writing as an opportunity to discuss International Parents Fellowship (Prayer Guide Day 8) and the ministry Alabama WMU provides to those with children serving overseas. Mail the cards to Alabama WMU at P. O. Box 681970, Prattville, AL 36068 to be distributed at the next IPF meeting.

5. Mocha and Dr. Myers

Either in your church's kitchen or at home before you come, prepare enough mocha (<https://bakingmischief.com/homemade-mocha/>) for each of your students to taste some. Many of them will likely have had it before, but what they might not know is that the coffee and chocolate concoction actually derives its name from the country where Dr. Martha Myers made her home for 25 years and ultimately lost her life. Yemen's port city of Mokha held a monopoly on the coffee trade for hundreds of years, and the famous drink is still popular there today. If time permits, show the "Two Spiritual Giants" video found at Myers-Mallory.com/resources. Conclude in prayer, thanking God for people like Martha Myers and Kathleen Mallory who committed to go and tell. Pray for God to raise up future missions leaders from your group.

As you conclude, give each student an offering envelope. Encourage them to pray about how much they should give, and remind them when to return their offering.

Activities for ADULTS

In advance, read the Myers-Mallory Prayer Guide to familiarize yourself with the areas of ministry referenced below.

1. International Parents Fellowship, a ministry of Alabama WMU, provides a place where parents can feel safe to share the unique challenges and blessings of having children who serve as international personnel (Prayer Guide Day 8).

Engage your group in "World Café" conversations to develop prayer ideas for international parents. In advance, write the words Joys, Concerns and Prayer Needs on colorful sheets of paper and affix those sheets to a wall. For World Café, participants spend 5-10 minutes in groups of three to five brainstorming answers to questions. Ask participants to gather in small groups. Lead them to brainstorm the joys parents of international workers may experience and to write their ideas on sticky notes – one idea per note. When this conversation ends, ask participants to place their notes under the Joy sign and move to a different grouping. For the next conversation, ask them to brainstorm and write common concerns parents of international workers may have. After the allotted time, ask participants to place their sticky notes under the Concerns sign and move to new groups. Lead groups to think about and write possible prayer needs of parents of international workers. Ask participants to place their notes under the Prayer Needs sign. Lead participants to walk around the room to read through the collected lists and share new insights they developed through their conversations. Invite participants to pray for the International Parents fellowship to grow, for missionaries' work to flourish and for Candace McIntosh and her team as they encourage international personnel. Finish the activity with participants offering silent prayer based on their World Café experience.

2. Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief teams work to help people who've been affected by disasters.

When a disaster occurs, many different teams are needed, including administration, assessment, chainsaw, chaplaincy, childcare, cleanup, communications, mass feeding, shower and laundry

ministries. To engage participants with disaster relief, invite one or more ABDR volunteers to share their experiences and describe the different disaster relief ministries and how they've seen God work. If Disaster Relief volunteers are not available, read some of the stories about recent disaster relief efforts at sbd.org or thealabamabaptist.org and develop scripts about the experience both from the perspective of an ABDR volunteer and a victim of a disaster. Enlist volunteers to read the scripts. Highlight how God works through disaster relief. Share how new volunteers are needed and training is ongoing. Build in time at the end of the session for participants to think and write about their own spiritual gifts and how the Lord could use those gifts through ABDR. Invite them to pray quietly for the ministries of ABDR and to ask God for guidance in using their gifts to "give a cup of cold water in Jesus' name."

3. In south Alabama, Brian Harper and Ramón Vielza (Prayer Guide Day 4) are working with other pastors to plant Hispanic Baptist churches in south Alabama.

In advance:

- Visit PlantAlabama.org/church-planter/ or call 334.613.2315 to find names and addresses of church planters in your area.
- Watch the video about I-10 Church (find at Myers-Mallory.org/resources) and develop a few questions about the video.
- Set up an encouragement center with the names and addresses of church planters, pens or markers, note cards and Bibles.

Introduce Brian Harper and Ramón Vielza using the Prayer Guide Day 4. Before showing the video, share the questions you developed and ask participants to listen for the answers. After viewing the video, review the questions and answers, and then ask participants to share their thoughts about areas of life in which church planters may need encouragement. Direct participants to the encouragement center and invite them to write notes of encouragement, scripture and prayer to church planters. End the session with prayer as directed in the Prayer Guide Day 4.

continued

Activities for ADULTS *(continued)*

4. There are about 400 missionaries with the International Mission Board and North American Mission Board who call Alabama home.

Read from the Prayer Guide Day 5 about Alabama Baptist churches connecting with international missionaries. Send your group on an international missions virtual scavenger hunt. Divide the group into eight smaller groups and assign each small group an IMB affinity group (European Peoples, North African and Middle Eastern Peoples, Sub-Saharan African Peoples, Central Asian Peoples, South Asian Peoples, Asian Pacific Rim Peoples, American Peoples and Deaf Peoples). Ask the groups to visit IMB.org/people-and-places on their electronic devices and to click on their assigned affinity group to learn facts about the groups and their prayer needs. After groups have collected their information, ask a spokesperson for each group to share what they learned and ideas for praying for the group. End with prayer as directed in the Prayer Guide Day 5. (NOTE: Use the number of affinity groups that works best for the number and interests of your group. Do include South Asians Peoples to learn more about the area in which *Nicole works.)
**name changed to protect identity*

5. Rob Jackson, state missionary for church revitalization, says he is “seeing God breathe a breath of excitement” in churches throughout Alabama. Jackson invites us to “rejoice with God and join what He’s doing.” So how about your church? Do you have areas that need to be revitalized? Why don’t you start with a look at your church facility? Are there areas that need a good cleaning or sprucing up? Before your meeting, ask church leadership for permission to work in those areas. Begin your meeting with a summary of the Prayer Guide Day 6. Give your group directions and the necessary items needed for working in the areas your church leadership has chosen for cleaning or organizing. Invite your group to clean, guiding them to pray for workers, participants and visitors. Ask them to pray for revival in your church and community. Before the session ends, come back together to share your progress and pray together as directed in the Prayer Guide Page 6.

Take time to pray for and collect the offering, or remind the group when the offering will be collected.



Myers-Mallory.org