



Q&A with Cathy Locklear

CMBA Ministry Mobilizer Cathy Locklear has announced that she will retire from her staff role August 31 to spend more quality time with her family. For more than 20 years Cathy has served alongside Midlands churches in a variety of community impact efforts including food pantry and other hunger assistance, evangelism block parties, prison and state fair ministries. She recently shared her thoughts on her time with CMBA and how she has seen its churches grow and develop a deeper heart for reaching the lost.

What first drew you to accept a ministry position with CMBA?

“After the birth of my third child, I came to realize the cost of daycare outweighed the benefits of a full-time job. At the time I was serving as youth director at my church and, in passing, I mentioned my dilemma to my pastor. The next day he contacted me about a posting he had seen for a part time Food Pantry Coordinator at the association. I had never even heard of the Columbia Metro Baptist Association. I interviewed with Dr. John Platt and Rev. Paul McKee and was hired the following week. I believe there is no such thing as coincidences. God opened the doors and I walked through.”

Thinking about those early days, what memories do you have about CMBA church involvement and partnership?

“At that time, the food pantry was located next to Crescent Hill Baptist, and open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am to 12pm. Churches would drop off food on Tuesdays and we served the public directly both days. Every Tuesday we had churches drop off food. I was blessed by the stories of how the churches used this project to promote missions and giving. The stories would range from asking children to bring food every day during Vacation Bible School to adult Sunday School classes holding Carolina vs Clemson competition food drives.”

Any Impacting Communities ministry/ministries that you helped to begin that you are really proud of?

“When the food pantry moved from Crescent Hill we saw a need to ‘spread out’ to different areas of town. We established three regional food pantries and encouraged churches to work together in these areas. In the southeast area the pantry was at SouthEast Community Church, at Eau Claire in the north and at Rosewood served the downtown area. This model worked for a time. We now have moved our focus to joining each church where they are in ministry, this includes hunger ministry. I have also always been available to consult with churches that want to begin hunger ministries. Years after first working with Concord Baptist in Lugoff I saw that they were still using forms I had shared when they first began their ministry. Pastor Steve Reynolds told me the community has come to depend on them for the food they provide weekly. Stories like this are very rewarding to me.”

What are some things CMBA churches do well with regard to community impact ministries?

“The churches of the CMBA always step up when called upon. When hurricane Katrina caused thousands of people to flee to Columbia, the city of Columbia called CMBA and we immediately called our churches. They responded and fed and counseled thousands of displaced individuals. When the United Way organized three annual three-day medical and dental clinics staffed around the clock at the Carolina Coliseum and fairgrounds, they called CMBA and we called our churches. They responded with volunteers to serve in medical capacities, counsel those in need and of course to feed them. Every year the needs of the State Fair ministry and the Prison Picnic events are met because our churches provide. When called on to donate health kits and prisoner packets, we have never fallen short of the goals and it’s because of the generosity of the churches.”

Our Family Stories is a series of stories provided by the Columbia Metro Baptist Association about the people and congregations of the family of Baptist congregations in the Midlands of South Carolina.

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What are some opportunities you see for CMBA churches moving forward to better reach neighbors with the gospel?

“Churches should see every ministry as an outreach tool to build relationships. Doors open when churches form relationships within their community. Relationships lead to opportunities to share the gospel. These ministries, though called by the same name, will look different in each church. Another important aspect of what I do is to become familiar with the local ministries our churches may choose to work with. Most that I have talked to share our same vision to see the people they minister to be exposed to Jesus through their ministry. Oliver Gospel, Toby’s Place, Reconciliation Ministry, Home Works and The Cooperative Ministry are a few of these community ministries that do share our vision. Likewise, there are some that I choose not to endorse based on how their vision statements or practices may differ. I consider it an honor to be trusted by the churches.”

What would you say is a “hidden gem” about the CMBA family of churches that some people might not realize?

“Over the years I have really enjoyed seeing our churches work together. For many years I enjoyed organizing a team of youth that traveled throughout CMBA churches each summer to help smaller membership churches hold Vacation Bible School. The association is always available to go that extra mile to support the churches in their quest to reach the lost for Jesus. An example of this is the acquisition of the block party trailer, which is an excellent ministry tool that is available to all of our churches.”

As you retire, what memories will make you smile for years to come?

“My fondest memories will be of the individuals I have worked with over these 20-plus years. As individuals start to wish me well, I am saddened by the thought of not speaking with them on a regular basis after I retire. My wish is to be remembered as someone who served from the heart, sincerely loving the churches in the manner that Jesus loved his Church.”

A retirement celebration honoring Cathy’s impact on CMBA individuals and churches is planned for Thursday, October 7, in Columbia. Additional details will be announced in coming weeks. For more on Cathy’s tenure and ministry, listen to her [podcast interview](#) with George Bullard and Chris Reynolds on our website at www.columbiametro.org/podcast.