

CSU Cover the Campus Prayer Guide

Parent Edition

2021-2022

CHARLESTON
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY





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Dear Parents,

You know that sensation you feel when someone is talking about you? We hope your child feels that sensation this year, because the professors and staff at CSU will be talking about your child often this year. They will be talking to God as they pray for your child each week. We invite you to pray with us!

Your child is at a university where he or she is seen as the whole that God created him or her to be. Yes, your child is a college student, and may also be an athlete, a mother, a volunteer, a friend, a member of the military, a musician, or a husband. Your child has dreams and aspirations for the future. There will be hurdles and challenges to face on a regular basis. At CSU, we recognize that your child is more than a number, more than a name, more than a student. He or she is a Child of God. And we will pray for your child all year long.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Each week, you can open this prayer guide to find a devotion written by a faculty member. As you read the devotion and spend time in prayer, know that the faculty and staff are praying on this same topic. We even have a student version written just for them! You can download the prayer guide from charlestonsouthern.edu/coverthecampus.

This year, remember that the Lord is near your child as they celebrate, struggle, and grow. We yearn to share in his or her life and provide support through all the years' experiences. Together we Cover the Campus in prayer. Together we cover your child in prayer!

In God's Love,
CSU Faculty and Staff

Week 1: Let the Games Begin - President Dondi Costin

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.” - 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 (NIV)

The Olympic Games concluded earlier this month after a one-year delay because of the pandemic. Finally, after all that training and sweating and praying, the swimmers swam and the runners ran. Medals were awarded, National Anthems were played, and athletes the world over returned home after what most of them would say was the experience of a lifetime. But those Olympians have nothing on your child, because the reward for a job well done at here at CSU will pay dividends long after those Olympic medals are forgotten.

In more ways than I can express in these few words, the Games of your child's life are about to begin. My opening message to you as a parent is simple: Encourage your child to seize the opportunity to experience God's best for themselves at Charleston Southern. In other words, run in such a way as to get the prize!

As they will soon learn, college is harder than high school. Expectations are higher. Responsibilities are greater. But so is the payoff. What they experience here will shape the rest of their life. Pray for your child to pursue God here. Make new friends. Study hard. Attempt the impossible, all the while knowing that “with God, all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

Go for the gold, Buccaneer families, because the best is yet to come.
Let the Games begin!

Week 2: Scripture-based Prayers for God's Provision - Prof. Julie Henderson

This week, we will pray scripture-based prayers about God's promise of His provision. For each one, insert your student's name in the blank space provided and replace the “him/her” wording accordingly.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for providing for all of ____'s needs. I know that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” (James 1:17 NKJV)

Help us both to trust in you, LORD; and say, “You are my God.” My times are in your hands. (Psalm 31:14-15a NIV)

Thank you for your provision of guidance to _____. Help her ears to listen for Your voice to hear Your words behind her, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” whenever she turns to the right hand or whenever she turns to the left. (Isaiah 30:21 NKJV)

Please help _____ to not to put her hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put her hope in You, LORD, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. (1 Timothy 6:17 NIV)

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 NKJV)

Week 3: A Prayer for Putting on the Full Armor of God - Dr. Ed Gravely

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.” - Ephesians 6:13 (ESV)

Father, help my student to stand firm today in his/her faith, and help him/her to live in all that you have provided for him/her. Thank you for the truth of the Scripture. Help my student to live in that truth.

Thank you for the righteousness that comes from faith in Jesus Christ. Help my student to live righteously today. Thank you for bringing the gospel to our family. Help my student to share the gospel today with someone who doesn't know you. Thank you for the faith to believe in Jesus. Help my student to walk by faith today.

Thank you for saving us. Help my student to live peacefully and confidently today knowing that you have given to him/her eternal life as a gift. And thank you for your Word. Help my student to know your Word better today and to live in obedience to it.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



Week 1: You Are Never Alone - Dr. Jacquelynn Pleis

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be terrified nor dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”- Joshua 1:9 (NASV)

It is fully possible for your child to be on a college campus surrounded by 3,000 other students and feel utterly alone. No matter how many semesters our students have been at CSU, the excitement of a new living space, new friends, and new classes can wear off. When this happens, feelings of isolation, loneliness, and homesickness can set in. In these moments, you can remind your child that these are just feelings. Feelings come and go. When these feelings persist, God has prepared for a special message in the book of Joshua. He is reminding us, commanding us, to be strong and courageous. Why? Because He is with your child...in the dorms, on the commute, in the dining hall, walking between classes. Helping your child comprehend the depth of this nearness is so important. One thing becomes perfectly clear. He is with us wherever we go because of love and for that reason we are never alone.

Lord, thank you for your constant reminder you provide to my child that you are all-present in his or her life. In small ways and in big ways, you remind my child that you are near. Help my child open his or her heart to you and the fullness only you can provide. Amen.

Week 2: The Solid Rock and Firm Foundation - Dr. Kerri Nelson

“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and horn of my salvation, my stronghold” - Psalm 18:2 (NKJV)

I wanted to share how pleased I am with your growth, hard work and dedication. I am sure you have all learned more about yourselves and what it takes to be successful. As I lean on that thought, I want to encourage you all to not focus on just worldly success. If you have learned anything this year, I hope that it is that success comes in all shapes and sizes and is not measured by mere accomplishments. With that said, we all need to focus and stand firm on what is truly the most important. This last year or so has been very challenging and put a lot of things into perspective. For myself, if I did not have a bedrock of faith, I do not know how I could have handled all that life has thrown at me. Let us think about David the author of Psalm 18, and all he went through. Even in the lowest of valleys he called upon the Lord for help, never giving up. He knew that God was for him and would never leave him or forsake him. We are told in God's word that we will have trials and tribulations in this world. But it continues to say; “but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33 NKJV). The key piece is having our faith firmly planted. With God as your Rock, your Fortress and your Shield; whatever life throws at you, you can handle it. Let us continue to keep growing our faith and keep our feet planted on the solid ground which is found only in Christ Jesus.

I want to pray for us all, Father God, Thank you for your past faithfulness. Thank you for never giving up on any of us. Please continue to grow us more into the image of your son Jesus. Give us the strength we need to overcome all that life throws at us. Give us patience and faith when we lack it, so we may never lose sight that you are there holding everything together. Remind us that you use our brokenness to maximize our usefulness. Please help us realize, that your greatest priority for our lives is for us to have an intimate relationship with You, Lord. And finally, I ask that for anyone who has not already made-

-You their firm foundation Lord, that they will call upon you, knowing that You are there and always will be waiting for them with open arms. I ask all of this in your Son Jesus' great name. Amen.

Week 3: Your Season as a Student - Dr. Christina Sinisi

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” - Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NKJV)
“He has made everything beautiful in its time.” - Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NKJV)

Your child may be a freshman and have now been away from home long enough to start feeling the pangs of homesickness—and you miss them! Your student might be a sophomore and facing big decisions about his major and minor and direction in life. Or, your student could be a junior and worrying about your grades and whether or not she should head toward graduate school or the world of work or just go sit on the beach and forget it all (don't worry, parent, this is very rare). Or, perhaps your child is a senior and neither of you can believe they're about to be an independent adult (mind you, there might be a transition period but the empty nest is in sight). No matter where your child is in his or her journey, know that Jesus walks alongside them and you. Your child can find support and guidance from the faculty and staff—and you--but most of all, know that God covers your child like a bird under his wings. “He has made everything beautiful in its time.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV) That includes you and me. Consult God and let him lead you and find comfort. You and your child are following God's purpose for them to the best of your abilities and He will love your child through every season. Prayer: “Dear Lord Jesus, I know you are with my child in every season of his life and in every decision. Help me to remember that you shelter them and make them beautiful. Amen.

Week 4: Memorizing God's Word - Dr. Skylar Stewart-Clark

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”- Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)

We all have habits and rhythms to our days. We wake up, start our routine, and follow some sort of schedule. We dedicate blocks of time to challenging tasks, fun tasks, and necessary tasks, such as cooking and eating. In the same way that we dedicate and carve out time for these tasks, we ought to also take time to dwell in God's word.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 tells us to bind God's law on our foreheads, talk about it wherever we go, and make it a key part of our lives. While you may not literally take scripture on your hands or stick it to your foreheads, the focus here is on this visual of carrying God's word with you in all that you do.

As a parent, think about practical ways to encourage your student to establish healthy rhythms of memorizing God's Word--this could be the way you exchange text messages, start or end your phone calls, or even as part of a routine when gathering at home.

Week 1: God Provides through His Disciples - Prof. Andrea Raines

*“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”
- Philippians 4:19 (NASB)*

Throughout our lives, we are inevitably faced with seasons of confusion, discernment, loss and even despair. In the midst of these seasons, it can be a struggle to truly embrace the reality of God’s love for us and His promise to provide for our needs. St. (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta, one of the most beautiful examples of Christ’s hands and feet on Earth in recent memory, found herself in these seasons of doubt or darkness. Yet, through the beauty of a disciplined prayer life, she was able to rely on God’s providence and carry on in love, serving her fellow man, even amidst poverty unimaginable to most American standards of living. In her words, “I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that He will guide me to do whatever I’m supposed to do, what I can do...I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things.” - St. Teresa of Calcutta Lord, please remind us to turn to prayer in those moments that we need to rely on your provision. Allow us to listen to Your voice as You lead me to carry the gift of myself and my service into our world. Amen.

Week 2: Co-workers with Christ: Making Time for Good News! - Prof. Marcey Jorgenson

*“For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:9 (NIV)
“Lord calls us to follow Him as “the light of the World”
- John 8:12 (NIV).*

*“Our lives are to be a living reflection of our Lord as we let [our] light shine before others, that they may see [your] good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- Matthew 5:16 (NIV)*

For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building. (1 Corinthians 3: 9 NIV) Fall break is here and your student is likely feeling some relief with a short break at hand. Your student’s days are probably filled with many demands – striving to do well in school while being a devoted spouse, friend, son, daughter, parent, grandchild, team member ... or select all that apply! Your student may ask, ‘who or what should be my top priority?’ Your student’s hard work for themselves, for their family, for their friends, or for their teammates is important. When done humbly and with humility your student bears witness to God’s blessings in their life.

In First Corinthians, Paul reminds us that we are called as God’s co-workers! Our top priority is working hard, for Him, as a “co-worker” of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ! Pray for and support your student to take some time from the ‘busyness’ of their schedule and the demands for their time to consider the significant part they play in being Christ’s co-worker! As “co-workers,” our Lord calls us to follow Him as “the light of the World (John 8:12 NIV). Our lives are to be a living reflection of our Lord as we let [our] light shine before others, that they may see [your] good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16 NIV)

Week 3: Valuing Your Relationships: Encouragement - Prof. Jane Moeller

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned[a] and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” - Philippians 4:8-9 (ESV)

How important is a smile? Some have raised concerns about the long-term effects of mask-wearing on young children who are unable to see smiling faces. What about you? What does the constant barrage of bad news, political unrest, and restrictions on your life do to your attitude and your relationships with others? The constant negativity can be overwhelming.

Do you have family members that are overwhelmed? Are you feeling depressed or disheartened in your daily life? Is your student negatively affected by the problems of the world? How do you encourage those around you when you are also living through such a burdensome time?

Reread the words of Philippians 4:8 for they offer great advice: keep your focus on these ideals and the blessings of God that they may guide your thoughts and actions with those you love. With this command is also a promise in verse 9: “The God of peace will be with you.” No matter how bad the world may look, remember that your God of peace, who laid down His life for your sins, will be with you. Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to keep my focus on You. Help me to see Your blessings as I encourage my student and my family.

Week 4: Let Us Run with Endurance - Dr. Jonathan Denton

“Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensues us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” - Hebrews 12:1-2 (CSB)

A lot goes into running a race well, especially a long distance race. Before the race even begins, runners pick out clothing that will be lightweight. They also only carry the essentials they need for the race. The runners study the course well they are about to run and are not distracted by the things that are outside of the race. During the race, runners hear the cheers of the crowd encouraging them to keep running even when they are tired. And finally, runners do not look down at their tired feet but instead keep their focus on the finish line. As we are in the middle of a long distance run for the semester, pray for your student to run his or her race well. Let’s encourage them by praying for them each day and by encouraging them with our words.

Pray that your student will confess his or her sins to God and lay down sins, idols, and worries at the feet of God so that your student can run without paralyzing guilt and fear. And finally, pray that your student will keep his or her eyes on Him, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

November 2021

Week 1: In All Things Give Thanks - Dr. Ed Gravely

*"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (ESV)*

Father, we have so much to be thankful for today. You have given us life. You have given us your Word. You have given us your Holy Spirit to live within us and to transform us. And, most importantly, you have given us Christ. You sent your Son into the world to die for us, so that we might know you and have eternal life. Thank you. Father, help my student today to be thankful for all your gifts even when they are more difficult to see. Help my student to be thankful that you are working in his/her life to mature him/her through difficulties. Help my student to be thankful that you are using his/her own struggles to make him/her into a person who comforts others. Help my student to be thankful that, even though this world is filled with suffering and tragedy and pain, you are at work here bringing people to faith in Jesus. And help my student to be thankful this world, as it is, won't go on forever. Thank you for the certain return of Jesus. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Week 2: Worldly Success vs Eternal Significance - Dr. Vicki Ball

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." - Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)

We all dream of being successful and of living a life of significance. Your student is likely striving to earn good grades, a degree, popularity, and even praise from you. Students want to make their parents proud of them. Our culture recognizes scholarly and work achievements as evidence of significance. But consider this: Your student's significance is already established by the price that was paid for him or her on the cross. Their value was assigned by our heavenly Father when they were created, and there is nothing they can do to make themselves any more worthy or valuable to God. They are already priceless!

In light of this, living a life of significance takes on new meaning. Rather than gathering praise and accolades as measures of success, CSU students are called to serve others in a way that is counterculture and recognizes each person's inherent value. An attitude of humility does not mean that they are less important than others; on the contrary, it demonstrates that they recognize the eternal worth of every person. Through serving others, they honor their spiritual inheritance, glorify God, and leave an indelible mark on the world.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, would you put someone in my student's path today that they can serve? Transform their desire for worldly significance into a passion for putting others' needs before their own. Help them to live a life of eternal significance through serving others.

Week 3: Everyday Worship - Prof. Kimberly Downing

*"Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshipped." - Exodus 34:8 (NIV)
"Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy." - Psalms 33:3 (NIV)*

Most of us have an idea in our heads of what it looks like to worship. Some of us think of prayer, as we see in Exodus 34:8, "Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshipped." Some of us think of musical worship, such as in Psalms 33:3, "Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully and shout for joy." For most of us, the mental picture matches one of these. We think of bowing our head, kneeling, or of singing at the start of our church service. I wonder, though, how many of us translate the idea of worshipping into our daily lives. I'm not talking about singing along to the Christian radio station in the car or saying a prayer before a test. I mean making our lives everyday worship. God has called each of us to do something with our lives. It could be teaching, working in healthcare, serving as a missionary, working as an accountant, or serving as law enforcement. No matter what our calling is, we should answer it and do it to the best of our ability. In doing so, we are worshipping the God that called us to serve. Serving with our whole heart and life is worshipping. Turn everyday into your worship to God, by living out the calling that He has given for your life.

Week 4: You Will Bear Fruit - Dr. Julie Fernandez

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." - John 15:1-4 (NIV)

Do you feel like your child is at a time in his or her life where God is pruning them? Have friends, career paths, or personal interests changed, making them feel unsettled or frustrated? God is working to clear out the unnecessary barriers that keep your child from bearing fruit for His glory. His plan for them is more significant than any challenge they are facing currently. Hold on. After the pruning, they will grow stronger and have what they need to be that man or woman God is calling to do great work in His name.

Week 5: Family Connections - Dr. Robin Franklin

"In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other." - Romans 12:5 (CEB)

For many of us, nothing is more important than family, whether it is family born of blood, family born of friendships or family born of spiritual brothers and sisters. We love that you were born into our family. As a family we support you unconditionally. Wake up each day with confidence knowing the love and support of your family is with you. We pray that as you are away from us that God keeps you safe. Go to your destiny as you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Romans 12:5 reminds us this, "In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other." How sweet it is that we have a supportive family. We pray that you find other believers at CSU that will support you as well. Be prepared to have Christian professors, staff members, coaches, and other students circle you with love and support as you journey through your college years. Your parents and family members are praying that God leads you to your home away from home—your college family.

Dear Heavenly Father, we pray for strong family bonds for our child. We thank you for our family and the many years spent together. Help us always be peacemakers in our home and love others just as Christ loves us. In addition, may you embed our family member in a strong CSU family ready to support and encourage him/her on the college journey. Surround our loved one with spiritual friendships that are as strong as family. For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, "Peace be within you." (Psalm 122:8)

Week 1: The Finish Line - Dr. Amanda Butler

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”
- Galatians 6:9 (NIV)*

Victory over this semester is within reach as your child nears the finish line. Life may have thrown some curve balls, but with God’s grace (and a smidgen of support from their professors) they made it. As the semester comes to a close, did your child simply survive, or did they thrive? Are they limping across the finish line, or are they finishing with their head held high and arms outreached to The One who carried them through it all? The Lord reminds us to finish well, but what does that mean?

Look to the apostle Paul, formerly known as Saul, to understand this concept. He demonstrated one of the most incredible displays of finishing well, and Christians continue to reap the rewards of his harvest. Those who are steadfast in answering God’s call will reap a harvest from finishing well. Your child’s actions are witnessed by others; therefore, pray for them to stay focused and finish well so that they may reap the harvest God has set aside for them, and so their harvest may be a blessing to others.

Week 2: Jesus Is the King! - Dr. Jonathan D. Watson

*“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”
- Matthew 1:1 (ESV)*

One may wonder if Matthew knew that these words would be the opening not only of his book but of the New Testament, if he would have started with a punchier opening. The repetitive nature of genealogies can make our eyelids heavy; they seem boring. So why would Matthew begin his Gospel (“good news”) account like this? In the Old Testament, God’s salvation promises to his people are promises to save through a son, an offspring of Eve (Genesis 3:15), Abraham (Genesis 12, 15, 17; and his sons), and David (2 Samuel 7). With the opening words of his book, Matthew succinctly signals to us the fact that Jesus is the son, the offspring who fulfills God’s promises. He is the Son of Eve who would crush the head of the serpent. He is the Son of Abraham (and Isaac and Jacob) whose name would be great and who would establish a new people, in a new land, and through whom all the nations would be blessed. He is the Son of Judah (Genesis 49:8-12) and the Son of David, the king-priest who would reconcile God’s people and establish a forever dynasty and kingdom characterized by God’s own personal presence with this people. In this light, Matthew’s seemingly boring opening is revealed to be an exciting announcement that the King has come!

Father, with [name of student]’s first semester of the year behind us, help us to find our hope this Christmas season in the fact that Jesus is the King and the one through whom your blessings come! Amid our busyness and travel let us as a family not lose sight of your kingdom that has come and is still yet to come. During this advent season, may your Spirit fill our hearts with the love and peace of our King. May our celebration of Jesus’ first coming lead us to long for his second coming all the more!

How Do I Become a Christian?

The story of the Bible is simple: We were created “in the image of God” and made for a relationship with HIM! That relationship was ruined by sin, that is, any action, deed, thought that goes against GOD. The effects of sin are felt with “shame,” confusion, emptiness, etc. The world around us demonstrates the effects of sin. But the good news is that GOD, by his “love,” has provided a way for us to forever be in a relationship with Him through Jesus.

How do I become a Christian? God’s Word gives us two responses to JESUS’ sacrifice for our sins—trust and repentance. If you want to be saved and experience eternal forgiveness of sins, have the righteousness of JESUS given to you, and live daily in a relationship with GOD through JESUS, then you must “believe” that you have sinned against a perfect and holy God. Through prayer, “confess” that you are a sinner and ask for forgiveness of your sins. Scripture teaches us to “confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9, ESV). Call out to God now and place your trust in Him!

Second, repent of your sins. This means a 180 degree turnaround. Instead of living life your own way now you live it God’s way. Start by reading a chapter in 1 John each day and praying. Next, join a Bible study with believers who are excited about Jesus so you can be discipled. Third, join a church that believes in the infallible, inerrant word of God and that Jesus is the only way to be saved. Lastly, contact us as soon as possible so we can give you more information and celebrate with you on the best decision of your life (jdavis@csuniv.edu or 843.863.7218).

If you just experienced salvation through Jesus the Christ, you made the greatest response to the greatest news you could ever make! We, like all of heaven, are rejoicing with you! Remember, your walk with JESUS is a journey. Jesus calls us, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19 KJV) We cannot wait to rejoice with you. We look forward to hearing from you. Your “new” life will never be the same!

— Associate VP for Spiritual Life Jon Davis

January 2022

Week 1: Rededicate Your Life to Christ - Prof. Andrea Raines

“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray? And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not stray. In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.” - Matthew 18:12-14 (NAB)

In the hustle and bustle of life's demands, it is easy to lose sight of the purpose with which we should direct our lives. When we find ourselves in the company of our prayer community, making the grand gestures can seem like a no-brainer; but, when we find ourselves overwhelmed by the busyness of our lives' demands, the day to day fidelity to Christ sometimes slips to the back burner.

How blessed we are to serve a merciful God, who looks upon our shortcomings and still chooses to call us worthy. Lord, please help to bring our focus back to Your service, and to unashamedly offer our daily routines as our efforts to glorify Your name. We thank You for your mercy, and strive to rededicate not only our lives on the whole, but our seemingly-mundane daily tasks to Your service. Amen.

Week 2: Kindness - Dr. Jennifer Zakrzewski

“In everything you do, be careful to treat others in the same way you'd want them to treat you, for that is the essence of all the teachings of the Law and the Prophets.” - Matthew 7:12 (TPT)

Kindness. We all want others to be kind to us, but often I have to stop and ask myself how kind I am being to those around me. When considering kindness I'm reminded of Matthew 7:12 (TPT), “In everything you do, be careful to treat others in the same way you'd want them to treat you, for that is the essence of all the teachings of the Law and the Prophets.” Sometimes we get so wrapped up in our own concerns and how others are treating us that we forget the people around us are walking through their own struggles as well. This week, let's try to focus on showing kindness. Kindness is free, so sprinkle it everywhere! Your smile, hug, or simple gesture may just make a huge impact on someone else. Let's pray. Father, guide me this week to see beyond myself. It is challenging to look beyond what is happening in my own life and see the struggles others are facing. Help me bring kindness, smiles, and laughter to the world and my student this week. Allow me to be the agent of change spreading kindness to the CSU campus and beyond. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Week 3: Scripture-based Prayers about God's Mercy - Prof. Julie Henderson

This week, we will pray scripture-based prayers about God's mercy. For each one, insert your student's name in the blank space provided and replace the “him/her” wording accordingly.

Dear Heavenly Father, please help ___ understand this truth: Through Your mercies, LORD, she is not consumed, because Your compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. Lord, please help ___ to see that You are her portion, and that her hope is in You!” (Lamentations 3: 21-24 NKJV)

I give thanks to You, O God, I give thanks! Please help ___ to see Your wondrous works that declare that Your name is near. (Psalm 75:1 NKJV)

Help ___ to know: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is Your mercy

toward those who fear You; as far as the east is from the west, so far have You removed ___'s transgressions from her. As a father pities his children, so You pity those who fear You. Help ___ to remember that You know her frame; you remember that we are dust. (Psalm 103:11-14 NKJV)

Thank You LORD, for You are good! For Your mercy endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34) You have shown us what is good; And what You require of us. But to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with You, God. Please help ___ to do these things. (Micah 6:8 NKJV) In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 4: True Discipleship - Dr. Michael Bryant

“... Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.’ - John 8:31 (NIV)

While at CSU, your child will sometimes hear people discuss the concept of a “disciple.” The word was so important to the institution's founders that they included it as part of their founding principle in the 1960s when the school began (Matthew 28:19-20). The word “disciple” means “student,” which suggests that it involves learning about Jesus' teaching. But what is a true disciple? How does one know if he or she is a genuine disciple of Jesus? What does an authentic disciple look like? In John 8:31 NIV, Jesus explains the essence of true discipleship as follows: “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.” True discipleship, then, may be seen in a life that remains closely tied to His teaching. As a branch is attached to a vine, so should a believer's life be attached to Christ's teaching (John 15:1-8). As a parent, one of the most important things you can do for your child during their time at CSU is to ask God to help them understand what it means to be a disciple as defined by Jesus. Pray not only for your child, but also for professors, staff, and the administration, that they will grow in their understanding of genuine discipleship.

Week 5: Make Time for the Lord - Prof. Jennifer Bullock

“Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.” - James 4:14 (KJV)

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” - Ephesians 5:15-17 (KJV)

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” - 1 Peter 5:7 (KJV)

“So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.” - 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 (KJV)

As a parent we may feel stressed and even a little less relevant as we drive away from the campus in August and January. Our children seem out of reach as they start their new journey into higher education. First and foremost, you will always be needed; the needs may change but the relevancy you hold in their hearts will remain unchanged and constant regardless of your physical proximity. 1 Peter 5:7 (KJV) says “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” That ‘you’ refers to us AND our kids. If we pray daily for our children's hearts and lives and never forget God is looking out for them, we will all be able to sleep through the night a little easier knowing that their heavenly Father never slumbers. Teaching our children to pray and prioritize time with the Lord is a fundamental lesson we must introduce early in life. The tools to go to Christ with concerns, problems, or anything are essential elements in creating a successful college student. 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 (KJV) says, “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”

Week 1: More Than Their Major - Dr. John E. Kuykendall

“A man’s heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.” - Proverbs 16:9 (NKJV)

Your child often hears questions like “What’s your major?” or “What are you going to do after college?” Usually the one who asks is well meaning and hopes to get to know them a little better. Frequently, however, they miss the point. Your son or daughter—whoever they are—are MORE than what they study or what they plan to do. Each one bears the image of the living, loving, sovereign God who knows them perfectly already, who fashioned them for a particular purpose. While he/she may not experience as dramatic a calling as did the prophet Isaiah or as direct as the Apostle Peter, they are no less being prepared for a role that only he/she can play in the lives of those around them. Your child’s time on this campus, in this community, is an opportunity for them to begin to discover that calling. “How?” you ask. Simple: by drawing near to the One who made them. Knowing the LORD is the first step to knowing His will for their life.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the life you have given my child and praise you for your perfect plan for him/her. I thank you for the freedom our family has in Christ Jesus to draw near to you as adopted children in your greater family. I thank you for the assurance of your presence with them in the person of your Holy Spirit that he/she may indeed come to know you and discern your will for their lives. I pray that my son/daughter will have strength for each day you have appointed and will have the wisdom to recognize your call, to respond to it, and to find peace in your purpose. This I ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Week 2: Loving the Lord God with all Your Heart, Mind, Soul, and Strength - Dr. Jackie Fish

“And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.” - Mark 12:30 (NLT)

Love is on our minds and in the air this week. While romance, chocolate, and roses are planned for some, we can all celebrate Valentine’s week by focusing on following God’s commandment to “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength”. (Mark 12:30 NLT) We know that God exists and that He loved us enough to send his only Son to die for our sins - that is true love.

How can we show our love for Him? Loving begins with a Christ-like attitude. Keep an open heart, welcome everyone, and show His love through your actions. Pray with others, gently and lovingly offer time and caring, and provide support and nurture for every member of the CSU community. We are free to love God and love others. Open your heart and demonstrate gratitude for what Christ has given us. Be still and listen; build within your soul the ability to extend Christian love to those around you, in our classrooms, and in your own home.

Our Loving Father, we come to you today with love in our hearts for those you have brought into our lives through CSU. We ask you to continue to lead us down the paths where loving You with our hearts, our minds, our souls, and all our strengths will help us to become stronger Christians and role models for those you have brought to this amazing love-filled campus. You have brought us here to glorify your name. We call upon you to renew our minds and keep us focused on Your will, not our desires. Help us to be truthful, caring, and to love others more than we love ourselves. 1 John 4:19 NIV reminds us, “We love because He first loved us.” Amen.

Week 3: Honoring God Through Faith in Action - Prof. Marcey Jorgenson

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” - Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

“For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” - 2 Corinthians 4:5-6 (NIV)

Faith relates not only to a personal spiritual relationship with our Savior Jesus Christ. The presence of faith in us also results in a new relationship with those around us in this world. Paul describes the change, “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).

Such faith in action means “we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:5-6 NIV).

We shine out of darkness when we live life by faith in Christ. We are then called by Jesus to use every opportunity to testify of Him in a world that is in need of the Good News. We testify by our actions and our way of life following the will of God, and we honor God by faith in action.

Take a few moments to pray for your child: Heavenly Father, Thank you for the gifts You have given my child to use to Your glory. Help my child to see that You are his/her strength and source of energy in his/her work. Use his/her gifts to benefit those around him/her. Give my child insight into his/her skills; Give them wisdom to see where he/she can improve; Give him/her patience to hear Your words of advice and encouragement. When my child is unsure, give him/her confidence; When he/she is anxious, calm him/her so that he/she can accomplish the work You have set out for him/her; When my child struggles, help him/her to find peace with You. Bless my child’s work so that others may celebrate Your glory and come to the reward You have prepared.

Week 4: Prayer For Me to Be Empathic and Understanding - Dr. Julie Fernandez

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (ESV)

Father God, my child is struggling with their circumstances, relationships, or challenges in their classes. I know that you have shown us by example to be a compassionate listener and to love them where they are. As you tell us in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ESV, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God,” I know that I can’t take away our child’s sorrows or challenges but can listen and pray with and for them with reassurance and love. Help me to know when to act and when to step back and allow them to grow through this difficult time with total dependence on you. Thank you for being an empathic and understanding God, who loves us enough to send listening ears and loving hearts my child when they are crying out for comfort. Amen.

Week 1: Spring Forward With a Focus - Prof. Lori Tisdale

“Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you.” - Proverbs 4:25 (NIV)

If you happen to be a South Carolina native like me, you may revel in the new warmth of spring after the cold of winter. Spring is full of life, new energy, and growth. When we look outside and see blooming flowers, green grass, and abundant sunshine, we often feel renewed and joyful. It's easy to get wrapped up in outside activities and this renewed spirit, but it's also easy to perhaps lose our focus.

Solomon tells us in Proverbs 4:25, “Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you.” What wonderful guidance for our students, both in their academic semester and their faith. Your student may be struggling to remember to stay on the path with all the distractions around. Your student has two roads to focus on right now. One is the road to stay “on course” regarding classes this semester, so we hope and pray that they continue working hard on their assignments and studying (but perhaps head outside in the sun to enjoy that fresh air!) The other path to remember is staying “on course” of doing God's will. May your student keep that gaze forward as to gain His wisdom from His word.

Father, thank you for this renewal of life that we see all around us this spring. I pray that you help my child to continue to follow Your path as he/she progresses through this semester, and this life, and to stay focused on what matters most.

Week 2: Friends Over Time - Prof. Lori Tisdale

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” - Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

Two of my absolute closest friends are ones I met 23 years ago in college. I'm fortunate enough to live just over a mile from them and we often talk about our families growing old together. Some of my other friendships are new; we've met after a move, through church or work or our children, or perhaps a new hobby. Some of my other friendships didn't last. Thinking back, those were the ones where our values didn't align. My faith and my family are absolutely intertwined in everything I do; I also prioritize being positive and finding joy. So those who don't respect my values, or bring constant negativity, have not remained in my innermost circle.

Ecclesiastes 4:10 reads, “For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!” Pray that your child finds the closest of friends, who can build each other up, remind each other of His grace, pray with them and for them, and help one another find joy. May your child find that circle of people around them who will mutually follow God's plan and support each other, both now and maybe 23 years down the road.

Week 3: God's Game Plan - Dr. Amanda Butler

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” - Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Your child's enrollment at CSU means that they have some sort of “game plan” for their life. Perhaps you helped plan which classes they will take, and maybe even mapped out four years' worth of classes. If your child has not declared a major, you may be less certain of their path; nonetheless, the goal to graduate in four(-ish) years. Sometimes their plans will align with God's plans, but sometimes they won't. Ultimately, the Lord knows what's best for your children and when your child's game plan isn't His game plan, He may run interference. Paths that appeared wide open may instantly be blocked, and may require them to modify their existing plan, or create an entirely new one. This can be discouraging, frustrating, and may leave your child feeling defeated. In Joshua 1, God reminds us to be determined and confident, and that He is always with us. Take comfort in knowing that God has a plan for your child, and His plan is the BEST plan, and he WILL make a way for His will to be done. Furthermore, our Father is a kind, loving, and generous Father, and He can provide opportunities that exceed yours and your child's wildest dreams. Be prayerful in God's plans, trust Him in ALL things, and allow Him to guide your son's or daughter's footsteps as He leads them on His perfect path.

Week 4: A Good Soldier's Perseverance - Lt Col. Roosevelt Loveless

*“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.”
- 2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NKJV)*

Any military member who has spent time in service to their country understands that hardships are a part of the calling. While these hardships can show up in many different forms, a good soldier will, nonetheless, expect them to come and persevere through them so that they can ultimately accomplish the mission for which they were sent.

As believers, Paul compares our Christian life to that of a soldier's. And just as soldiers, we should expect hardships. Yet, if we are to be classified as a “good soldier,” we must persevere through those hardships so that ultimately we can accomplish our mission, which is to please the One who called us out of darkness and placed us into His kingdom.

Lord, thank you for the opportunity to serve in your kingdom. Give my child your strength today so that he/she may endure any hardship that comes their way. Help him/her to remember that no matter the hardship, you are there with them. I ask that the service he/she gives to you in return will be pleasing in your sight and ultimately leads others to you. Thank you in advance for the victory you will give, in Jesus' name.

Week 1: Renewed Hope - Dr. Ed Gravely

“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.” - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (ESV)

Father, today the heart of my student needs comfort. The semester is drawing to a close, and he/she has so much to do. I know that he/she has done many things this semester that were pleasing to you and many things this semester that were not pleasing to you. Help my student to finish this semester well. Help him/her to always place his/her hope in you. Father, I am thankful that our hope is eternal. Help my student to see that you have always loved us, and you will always love us. You have given us your grace which we didn't deserve, because that is who you are. Father, I pray that you would renew my student's hope in you. Establish his/her heart. Give him/her the conviction to believe more deeply in Jesus and to follow him in everything that he/she says and does. We can't earn your love and approval, because in Christ we already have both. I pray that truth would give my student the strength to finish strong and to serve you in amazing ways. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Week 2: A Chosen Instrument - Dr. Ryan Gimple

“But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.” - Acts 9:15 (ESV)

Paul was going to Damascus for one reason, but God had a different purpose in mind. Everything changed for Paul when he met Jesus, but God's plans remained the same. God had chosen Paul to be his instrument long before, a choice no one expected. Ananias laid his hands on Paul and scales fell from Paul's eyes. College students often begin school uncertain of their purpose, or perhaps seeking after another purpose. The path ahead sometimes appears unclear, especially when a student's vision is clouded. Pray for your student today that her eyes would be opened to God's great purpose for her. Pray that he would not walk blindly while he is pursuing his own purposes. God has chosen your son or daughter to be part of his purpose, to be his unique instrument in making his name known to all peoples. You can trust God's good purposes for your son or daughter. Pray that a professor or a friend would be like Ananias, and would lay a hand of encouragement on your student and help to clarify God's calling in his or her life. Lord, I pray that you would make your purpose clear to my son or daughter, and that you would open his or her eyes to your greater purpose. I ask that you would send a professor or a classmate to bring a transformed clarity of purpose and that my son or daughter would discover what path you have chosen for him or her as your chosen instrument.

Week 3: Head, Heart, Hands - Dr. Jacquelynn Pleis

“I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct according to what their deeds deserve.” - Jeremiah 17:10 (NIV)

Our children are good at separating head, hearts, and hands. With their heads, they do homework. With their heart, they determine relationships. With their hands, they play sports or work on the computer. But rarely do they intentionally use head, heart, and hands in unison. They end up feeling fractured. We can remind our students that all of who we are can be given in love to God. All the things we feel, we think, and we do. Here is something to consider. While we think we can separate things so easily, that is not how we are designed. We cannot feel closer to the Holy Spirit when we do not produce works that honor God. We cannot do good works if we do not feel God cares what we do. We do not know what God wants us to do when we are not reading his word. God has designed our heads, hearts, and hands to work in unison. When we think (head) on things that are pleasing to Him, we feel (heart) connected to God, and then we are called to take action (hands). When all of who we are works together, we feel more in harmony because we are using all the parts of ourselves as God intended.

Week 4: What Does it Mean to Flourish? - Dr. Ed Gravely

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” - Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

As the semester winds down, it is important to remember that because your student has faith in Jesus, then he/she is God's workmanship. God is crafting your student into the person he wants him/her to be. God has also created good works for your student to do, and he has laid those works out in front of him/her so he/she can begin doing them right now. Your student was not made to wander aimlessly through this life. He/she has a divine purpose, and that divine purpose begins and ends with the mission of Jesus to get the gospel to the ends of the earth. Your student will never be fulfilled and will never live up to his/her true potential if he/she doesn't begin doing the work of God. Pray that your student grows in his/her desire to follow Jesus, so he/she can do great things in this world.

Pray that your student learns now to leverage his/her life for the gospel and the mission of God, so your student will truly know what it means to flourish.

Week 1: Press on! - President Dondi Costin

“I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of [the ultimate prize]. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” - Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

Our Buccaneers have done it. They have run the race with perseverance and completed this lap, but their race is not yet over. No matter, they have demonstrated over and over again this year that they have what it takes to keep running. So encourage run!

The lessons you learned through the ups and downs of collegiate life have made you stronger, fitter, more resilient, and more faithful. Resist every urge to spend too much time looking in the rearview mirror, though. What’s done is done, so don’t get bogged down by regrets. And don’t rest on your laurels. Rather, take what you have learned and apply it to every other challenge and opportunity that will come your way. That’s how you win.

The Apostle Paul’s admonition in the verses above say it so much better than I ever could. What is his “one thing I do?” It’s keeping your eyes on the ultimate prize, regardless of the difficulties that come your way. That’s what running to win looks like.

So keep on keeping on. “Let us run the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith... Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart” (Hebrews 12:2-3). Trust me when I tell you that the best is yet to come.

Let Us Go Forth...

Charleston Southern University Family,

The creation of this Cover the Campus Prayer Guide has been a labor of love, by which we are honored to take part.

The students and their spirits have been covered in prayer by this committee from the inception of this project, in the throes of 2021, and they will continue to be, as they make their mark on the fabric of our lives.

It is our sincere hope that this prayerful journey through the academic year has not only brought clarity to the seasons, through the peace of joining them to Christ, but that your lives have been blessed by the prayerful fellowship with our Buccaneer family.

May the Lord continue to cover our students and their families in his grace-filled protection throughout the summer and may we all move forward in prayer with the intention to glorify God by our lives.

— Professor Andrea Raines



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Cover the Campus Prayer Guide: Faculty and Staff Edition



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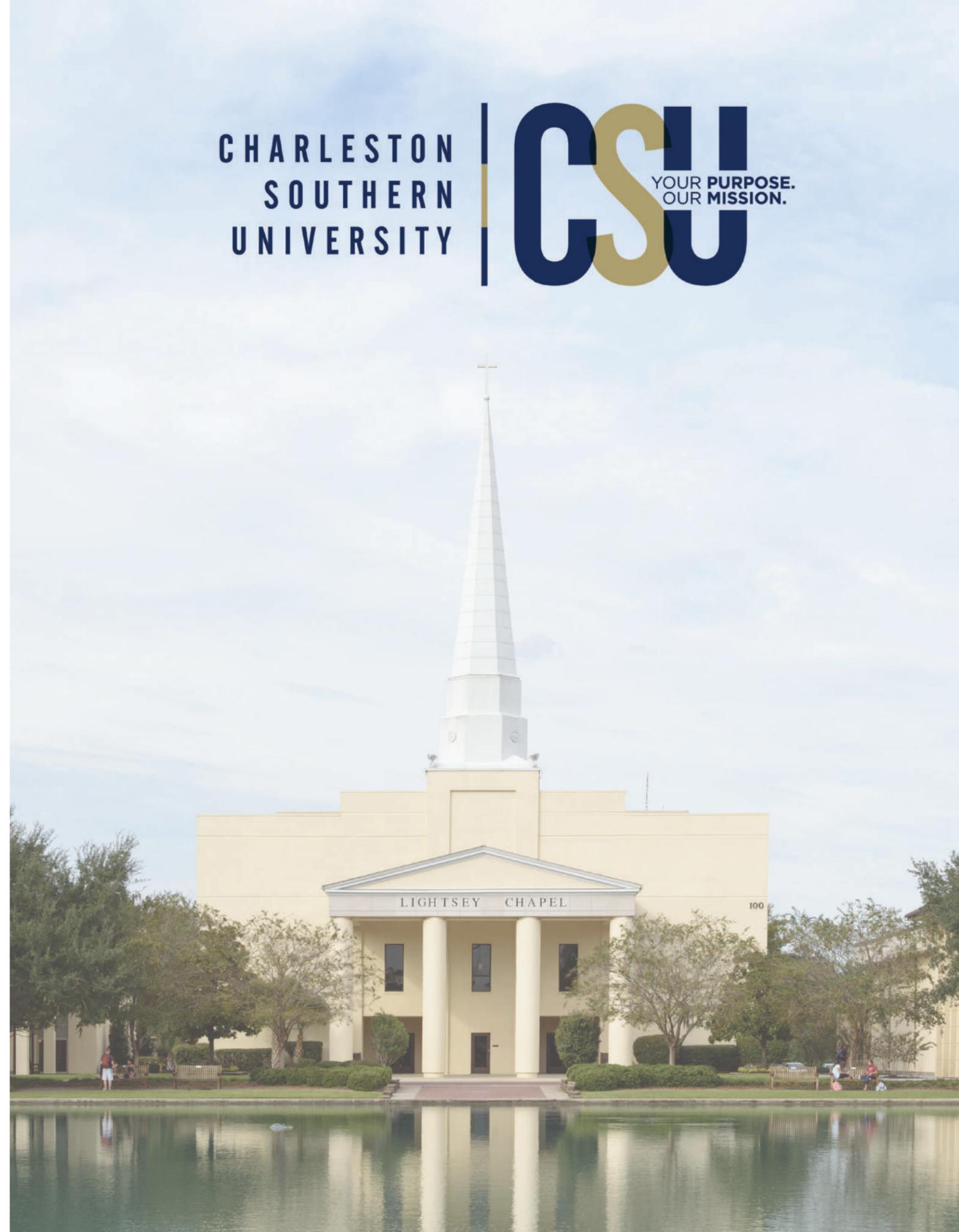
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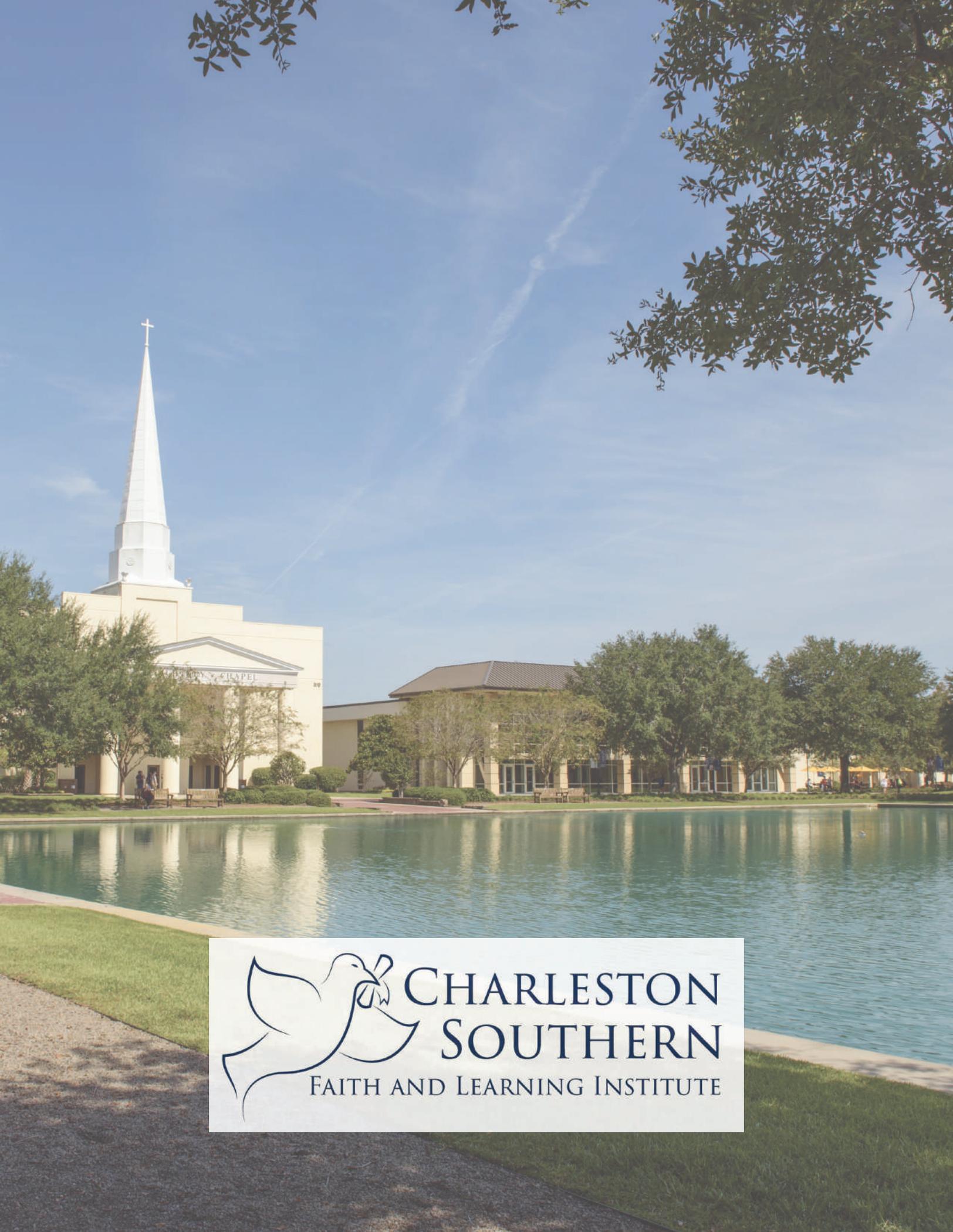


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