



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Local Partnership Brings Christmas to SCDC Inmates**

**Columbia, S.C. (Dec. 1, 2016)** The annual Christmas Packets for Prisoners project, jointly sponsored by the South Carolina Baptist Convention (SCBC) and the South Carolina Women's Missionary Union (SCWMU), will begin Monday, December 5 at St. Andrews Baptist Church in Columbia.

Since 1976, Christmas Packets for Prisoners has served more than 800,000 offenders, many of whom would otherwise go without during the holiday season. The South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC) houses more than 20,000 men and women at 22 institutions around the state. Volunteers make sure that inmates can count on at least one gift a year.

"These volunteers bring the hope, joy and comfort of the holiday season to a group who needs it most," said SCDC Director Bryan Stirling. "This simple act of kindness shows these men and women that they haven't been forgotten."

On Monday, December 5, 2016, volunteers and inmates will work side-by-side at St. Andrews Baptist Church located at 230 Bush River Road in Columbia unloading trucks bringing in donated items from churches who have been collecting them since early fall. The pre-approved items include: pens, notepads, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap and candy, all of which will be placed inside a zip locked bag with a Christmas card. The packages are then thoroughly inspected and prepared for delivery by SCDC to the inmate population.

For those interested in covering the 2016 Christmas Packets for Prisoners project, please contact Clark Newsom, SCDC Internal Communications Director, by phone (803)896-8578 or via email, (Newsom.Clark@doc.sc.gov)

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