



ASHLAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Joining Together on a Christian Journey of Love and Service

June 2026

2600 Ashland Rd
Columbia, SC 29210
ashlandumc.org

The Rev. Jonathan Harris, Pastor

pastor@ashlandumc.org

Phone Ext. 15

The Path: 8:45 AM Traditional: 11:00 AM Sunday School: 10:00 AM

Office Hours: M-Th: 8 am-3:30 pm

Telephone: (803) 798-5350

Ashland family,

Thank you to all those who provided feedback over the past month on a draft of a mission statement to guide our work together at Ashland United Methodist Church! To refresh your memory, that proposed mission statement was: "Ashland UMC makes and grows disciples who care for one another and serve the St. Andrews community."

The two primary pieces of feedback I have consistently heard are:

1. We need to specify that we are making disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. St. Andrews is too narrow to adequately describe the community we feel called to serve.

I believe these are both wonderful suggestions, and comments like these have prompted very fruitful conversations in committee meetings I have attended about what it means to make disciples of Jesus Christ and who we understand our community to be. Below are a few comments that I found to be insightful that I wanted to share.

- In Acts 1, Jesus deploys the disciples to be witnesses "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." This "rippling out" of the first disciples sounds a lot like how many at Ashland understand our collective mission field. While our mission field might begin with the area immediately around the church building (e.g., our fruitful ministry with Seven Oaks Elementary School), it does not end there! It moves outward into the communities where we live, from Irmo (e.g., Sharing God's Love) to Chapin, from Lexington to Columbia (e.g., Salkehatchie, Recycle Bicycle), and from West Columbia to places beyond our state (e.g., Red Bird Mission).
- Among several suggestions for how to capture this understanding of community, several committees have suggested changing "St. Andrews community" to "our communities."

What I think people have meant by this is that, while Ashland is called to serve the community around the church building, people also understand themselves to be called and deployed to service in these other communities where members of Ashland live, work, and travel. What a wonderful understanding of the church, not as a building, but as a group of people serving in the name of Christ everywhere they go!

As I write, I am preparing to share all of the feedback I have received at Ashland's May 26 Church Council meeting (all are invited to this meeting at 6 p.m. in Room 138, whether you are a member of Church Council or not!). My hope is that we can approve a mission statement that reflects the heart of this wonderful congregation that can then guide the decisions we make and ministries we pursue together.

I continue to be excited and thrilled about the privilege of serving as your pastor. Thank you for the many ways you generously share the gifts and graces God has given you in service to one another and to the communities in which we live!

In Christ,
Pastor Jonathan

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Ken Corbett
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Kyle Staples
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Robert Neese
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2026 Graduates

Tristan Micah Lotter
River Bluff High School

Amelia Rose Turner
Irmo High School

Virginia Miller
University of Georgia
Granddaughter of Gene & Clare Allen

Luke Wilson
UNC – Charlotte
Grandson of Jim & Mary Nell Wilson



Ashland Seniors at Play (ASAP)
“Summer Camp”
Friday, June 12, 11:30 AM
Hot dogs, hamburgers, and much more.
Special entertainment.
Sign up in Sunday School Classes,
Sunday bulletins or contact
the church office:
office@ashlandumc.org
(803) 798-5350, x 10



- Ashland has expenses while you are away. Offering may be mailed to the church office or given on the church’s website. (ashlandumc.org)
- VBS: June 15-19. 9:00 AM-Noon
- Columbia Salkehatchie Camp: July 11-18



VBS

June 15-19 – 9:00 AM-Noon
Registration forms are outside
Ashland Hall and the Narthex



Summer Kick Off
Youth Pool Party
May 31
3:00 PM-6:00 PM
220 East Nottingham Rd.
Columbia, SC 29210

Bring a Towel

Hamburger & Hot Dog
Dinner Provided

Snack Pack Update

Ashland UMC prepared and delivered **1,683** snack packs for children at Seven Oaks Elementary School during the 2025-26 school year! These snack packs provided **11,781** weekend meals to children in our community, and represent a financial commitment of over \$8,000.

Our Snack Pack mission is successful due to the generosity and volunteer efforts of many people in our congregation. During the past school year, four different UMW Circles conducted packing sessions. Our superb delivery team includes Richard & Susie Bid Brown and Bill & Jane Bryan; they deliver completed snack packs to Seven Oaks Elementary so the packs can be distributed to students each Friday. Other Ashland members shop for food items and prepare double grocery bags to use as packs.

The important work of our snack pack team and Ashland's support is greatly appreciated by the staff and families of Seven Oaks Elementary.

Students return to school on August 6, so we will soon begin to prepare for another school year of feeding children in food-insecure homes. You can help sustain this ministry through financial assistance to the designated Missions Snack Pack Fund or by donating 15 oz. cans of pasta.

Thank you to everyone at Ashland who participates in the snack pack mission!
Val Songer, Snack Pack Coordinator

Lutheran Family Services/Zimbabwe Mission Trip

The Missions Committee recently delivered six-bathroom kits (shower curtains, bath mats, towels, etc.) to Lutheran Family Services for upcoming refugee arrivals. Monies from recent Love Offerings and Mission funds were used to provide these items. Thank you to all who participated.

The ladies of Ashland made feminine products to go with the Union UMC Mission Team to Zimbabwe.

St. Andrews Care Collective

A recent Ashland Facebook post shared that we had received boxes and boxes of food items for our Blessing Box. The St. Andrews Care Collective is responsible for this huge donation. Members of this group are Ashland, Crossroads Community Church, Seven Oaks Presbyterian, McGregor Presbyterian, and St. Mary's Episcopal. A special thanks goes to Kyle Parham of Crossroads for handling the logistics of obtaining this food from Convoy of Hope and assisting with its disbursement to the churches.

Family Promise Gala

Judy Gaston was the guest of honor at the Family Promise annual gala held on April 24th. Also, special recognition was given to Chris Hurlong, the owner of Midas Muffler and whose company has donated 15 refurbished cars to clients of FP. Attending at the Ashland table were Jimmy and Margaret Smith, Jim and Nina Newcomb, Jim and Mary Nell Wilson, Ann Smoak, Martie Walker (Trinity UMC) and Gene and Mary Nell Trussel (Mt. Hebron UMC).

Wrap Up from ESL classes

The teachers report this was their "best ever" year, with students being very focused and committed to improving their English skills. They specifically appreciate being at Ashland and joining our celebrations at Halloween, Christmas, and Easter.

Once again, thank you everyone for participating in our ESL special activities. Ann Smoak

Columbia Salkehatchie Camp

Ladders will be placed in the Narthex and Ashland Hall with cards for you to purchase gift cards for the Columbia Salkehatchie Camp.

Ashland Readers

The next meeting of Ashland Readers will be Sunday, June 28, 2026, at 3:00 in Room 111. Below are the upcoming books:

June 28, 2026: Isola, by Allegra Goodman

July, 2026: No meeting

August 16, 2026: The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny, by Kiran Desai

**Ashland United Methodist Church
2600 Ashland Rd
Columbia, SC 29210**

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