



ASHLAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Joining Together on a Christian Journey of Love and Service

December 2025

2600 Ashland Rd
Columbia, SC 29210
ashlandumc.org

The Rev. Jonathan Harris, Pastor

pastor@ashlandumc.org

Phone Ext. 15

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

Telephone: (803) 798-5350

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

Ashland family,

A mentor of mine once observed that the measure of an effective offense in football is not how many plays the team runs, but whether or not they actually move the ball down the field. He then asked me, “Is the church you serve moving the ball down the field (i.e., making progress in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world), or are you just running plays (i.e., doing what you’ve always done without pausing to assess what you are—or are not—accomplishing for the sake of God’s kingdom)?”

Ashland, you are moving the ball down the field! Since our summer small groups, Ashland continues to grow its impact on children and youth beyond just the implementation of children’s messages in worship and delivering their colorful pictures to homebound members. One instance of this was on November 9 when we had 16 children in worship between the two services! A special thanks to Ryan Keith and to the many volunteers who work so diligently to disciple our children and youth!

You are moving the ball down the field when it comes to caring for one another. Our congregational care team has now delivered Communion twice and will continue to offer this ministry to our homebound members. Additionally, we had our first grief support group for people who have lost a child or grandchild on November 2. Our next gathering will be on Sunday, December 14 at 3 p.m.

You are moving the ball down the field when it comes to outreach to our local community. Our Communion offering on November 2 and the accompanying match from the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund yielded more than \$4500 for Sharing God’s Love. Fourteen Learning Buddies have now been mentoring students at Seven Oaks for nearly a month.

The final initiative from the small groups, creating a shepherding system, is now in a position to begin. I have scheduled a meeting with those who expressed an interest in helping with this for December 4th. This initiative is so important! When I arrived at Ashland and began reaching out to people who have become disconnected from Ashland over the years, I discovered that there were several hundred people who have fallen through the cracks in the past. My prayer is that creating an intentional shepherding system will ensure that everyone in the church will feel noticed, cared for, and connected.

In this season of Advent—a season of watching for the presence of Christ and his kingdom—I celebrate the many ways you are already making Christ’s presence known through your care, outreach, and investment in making disciples!

In Christ,

Pastor Jonathan

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Karen Zobel
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Maria Anderson
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The GIVING GARLAND

November 23 – December 16

Angel Ornaments for gift cards
in Narthex and Ashland Hall

Christmas with Epworth and Family Promise of the Midlands

WALMART, TARGET Gift Cards
Return gift cards on Sundays
or deliver to church office

Monetary Gifts

By check to Ashland UMC and marked
“Christmas with Epworth” or “Family Promise”
OR

E-giving at <http://www.ashlandumc.org/egiving>

****Important Reminders for Year-End Giving in 2025****

- Please note that all contributions for 2025 must be received or postmarked by **Wednesday, December 31st**, to be recorded in your 2025 giving statement. Contributions received after this date will be included in your 2026 giving statement.
- If you are considering making a stock gift for 2025, please start the process as soon as possible. Brokerages may require a week or more to process these transactions. For information regarding the Ashland brokerage account, please contact Karen Zobel.
- If your address has changed during 2025, ensure that the church has your correct address on file so that your year-end giving statement is mailed to the correct address.
- All expense reimbursements for 2025 should be submitted to the finance office by **Wednesday, December 31st**. Reimbursement requests related to 2025 that are received after this date may be applied to the 2026 budget instead of the 2025 budget.

Family Ministries

Thoughts? Questions? Ideas? Want to join our email list?
803.798.5350 x 12 youth@ashlandumc.org

Friday, November 21st	5 th Quarter 6:30-8:30 PM No Family Ministries
Sunday, November 23rd	No Family Ministries
Sunday, November 30th	MYF and ACME 4:30 PM MYF and ACME
Sunday, December 7th	4:30 PM MYF and ACME
Sunday, December 14th	4:30 PM Christmas Party 5:30 PM No Family Ministries
Sunday, December 21st	
Sunday, December 28th	

Homeless Compassion Bags are available to pick up in the Narthex and Ashland Hall. Please take one to keep in your car.

Holiday Grief Support Group Meeting Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 PM

Ten people gathered on November 2 for Ashland's first grief support group for those who have lost a child or grandchild. Our next support group for those who have lost a child or grandchild will be held Sunday, December 14 at 3 p.m. in Room 138. The topic will be coping with grief during the holidays. In addition to church members, please share this with friends or neighbors who might benefit from this time of sharing.

Thank You

I would like to take a minute and say thank you to all of those who prayed for me and my family during my recent surgery. The surgery was a success and I give credit to all of the prayers for making that happen. Thank you for your support during this time.

Robert, Erin, Austin, Beth, and Alyssa Harrelson

Coke Machine

Due to low canned drink sales, the Coke machine was removed from Ashland Hall by the vendor.

Church Office Holiday Hours

The church office will be closed Wednesday, December 24th – Friday, January 2nd.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Ashland will host our ESL students on December 10th to celebrate the Christmas season. We will join in a sing-a-long of our favorite carols and then have conversation groupings. I need about 10 - 12 people to volunteer with this mission. Please let me know if you are available. More details about time later.
Ann Smoak 803-331-7598.

From the Trustees

A BIG thank you to Ron Trout and Duncan McClive for your help with identifying and fixing the roof leak in Ashland House! Your expertise is very much appreciated!

Another BIG thank you goes out to Erik Sickinger for your assistance in repairing some damaged drywall in the sanctuary. Your willingness to help keep Ashland in tip top shape is appreciated!

Ashland Women in Faith

On November 9th, Ashland's Women in Faith held a luncheon program for all women in the church. Three ladies were awarded the Special Recognition Pin for their service to Ashland and our community. The recipients were: Lynda Mixon, Jean Smith, and Judie Travis. Congratulations to these ladies and thank you for sharing your talents.

Ashland Readers

The next meeting of Ashland Readers will be Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 3:00 in room #111.

Below are the upcoming books:

December: No discussion – Happy Holidays!

January 18, 2026: Snow in August, by Pete Hamill

February 15, 2026: The Names, by Florence Knapp

Upcoming Events

5th Sunday Brunch

November 30th @ 10:00 AM, Ashland Hall

Bring your favorite brunch side dish to share and non-perishable food items for the Blessing Box.

Program: Family Promise

Ashland UMC - Church Council

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

6:30 p.m. – Room 138

Community Event – Free Admission

“The Living Christmas Story”, December 5-7, 6:30-9:00 PM

32nd Annual Drive-Thru Living Nativity

Union UMC, 7582 Woodrow St., Irmo, SC

SC Brass Band – Free Admission

Sunday December 7th, 4:00 PM, Sanctuary

Traditional Service Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 14th, 11:00 AM, Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

5:00 PM, Sanctuary

ASAP New Years Eve Party

12:00 Noon, Ashland Hall

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

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Barbara Higgins	Michael Higgins	Monetta Pitts
Barbara Polk	Pat Towery	Rev. Jim Nates

For Pastoral Care:

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