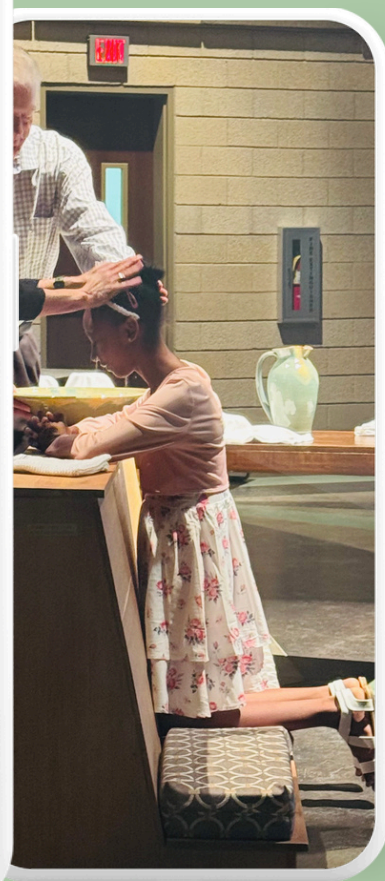


GRACE STUDENT MINISTRY

Joining God's Redemption Mission Together

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

2026-2027

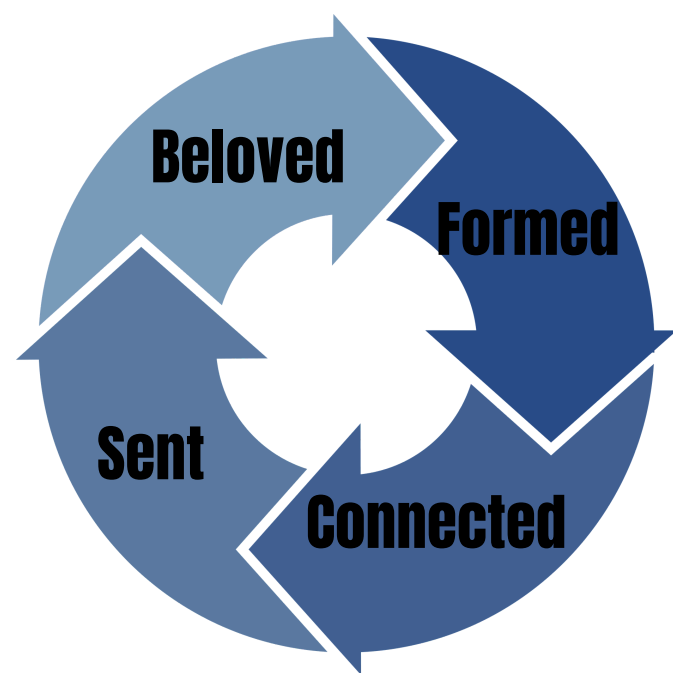


The Story We're Joining...

God is busy! We believe that God is already at work in the lives of young people. Our role isn't to "manufacture" faith, but to help students recognize God's presence, discover who they were created to be, and join God's ongoing work of redemption in the world.

Grace Student Ministry is not just preparing students to follow Jesus someday--we invite them to practice following Jesus today within the life of the Church. We exist to awaken young people to their identity as **beloved**

image-bearers of God and **form** them into disciples of Jesus through a deep rooting in Scripture and spiritual practices. Through authentic **connection** with others, both inside and outside the Church, we strive to equip and **send** students out into the world to join God's work of redemption.



*Grace & Peace,
Rev. Amber Forrest*



Who Are We Becoming?

Grace Student Ministry prays for students to be growing into disciples of Jesus who...

- ✦ know they are made in God's image
- ✦ practice rhythms of reading Scripture and other spiritual disciplines
- ✦ build authentic relationships
- ✦ seek justice and mercy
- ✦ love God deeply
- ✦ serve their neighbors with joy
- ✦ notice God's work in everyday life
- ✦ remain connected to the Church

Group Norms

Our life together is guided by three simple commitments inspired by John Wesley's General Rules. These practices help us grow as disciples of Jesus while creating a safe and caring community for every student.

Do No Harm | Do Good | Stay in Love with God

For more information about our group norms, feel free to contact Amber (amber@gotgraceumc.org or 864-992-1354).

How We Grow Together

At Grace Student Ministry, we believe discipleship is a lifelong journey. Every opportunity we offer is designed to help students grow as **Beloved, Formed, Connected, and Sent** followers of Jesus.

Beloved

Discovering who God says you are.

Students are shown they are beloved through...

- a foundational focus on God's grace in their lives
- regular acts of kindness and remembrance of what matters to them
- Student Encouragement Network volunteers

Formed

Learning to follow Jesus every day.

Students are formed through...

- digging into Scripture during Sunday Night Gatherings
- exploring the Christian faith at Confirmation
- Sunday School discussions
- exposure to regular rhythms of spiritual practices and special retreat opportunities
- opportunities to lead in both Student Ministry and in the life of the church

Connected

Growing together in Christian community.

Students are connected through...

- community-building fun
- Student Encouragement Network visitations
- small group discussions
- service to our church and community alongside adult mentors

Sent

Joining God's redemptive mission.

Students are sent out through...

- regular service opportunities in our community, chosen by the students
- Salkehatchie Summer Service Camp
- volunteer opportunities at Vacation Bible School
- Annual Conference Youth Delegation

Student Ministry Chats

SUNDAY SCHOOL (IN YOUTH WING, 9:50AM - 10:50 AM)

Throughout the year, students will explore important questions and topics about Christian faith and what it means to follow Jesus. Through engaging conversations, activities, and Scripture investigations, we'll explore:

The Bible | John Wesley and Methodism | God's Grace | Worship | Holy Spirit Salvation | Prayer | Sacraments of Baptism and Communion | Jesus | etc.

These conversations will be revisited throughout the year, giving students opportunities to engage with these important aspects of faith even if they miss a Sunday.

CONFIRMATION (VARIOUS SCHEDULED EXCURSIONS/EVENTS)

Students interested in exploring whether making a proclamation of faith and joining the church is the right next step for them will have additional opportunities throughout the year to go deeper through special gatherings, excursions, service, and worship experiences.

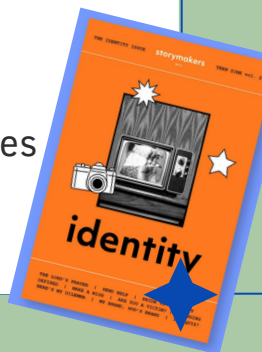
Confirmation is available to our 6th Graders and other students who wish to participate, with the journey culminating in May.

SUNDAY NIGHT GATHERING (IN YOUTH WING, 5:45PM - 7:30PM)

Our main weekly hangout, Sunday Night Gatherings are full of fun and learning together about what it means to live as beloved children of God who are being formed into disciples of Jesus. Building connections with one another prepares students to go out into the world to love and serve their neighbors, as partners in God's mission of redemption.

IDENTITY STUDY (IN YOUTH WING, WED. @ 6PM)

What does the Lord's Prayer have to say about who we are? This small group study invites students to explore their God-given identity by walking them through the prayer Jesus taught his first disciples pray. We'll get curious about what scripture means when it says we've all been adopted as heirs to God's kingdom.



"Called" Fall Retreat

OCTOBER 9-11, 2026

Ridge Haven Retreat Center
Brevard, NC



WHAT TO EXPECT

Two nights away in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina filled with worship, great food, outdoor adventures, games, small groups, campfires, and time to build friendships.

We'll be staying together in Iverson Lodge at Ridge Haven Retreat Center.



THIS YEAR'S THEME

Called

Every person has a calling. This weekend, we'll explore what it means to hear God's voice, discover our gifts, and join God's work—in our homes, schools, church, and community. Because God's call isn't just for someday...it's for today.



WHO CAN ATTEND

All students in **Grades 6 - 12** are invited! Whether this is your first retreat or your fifth, we'd love for you to come!

Retreat Shepherds are also a crucial part of this event. Please consider if you would like to join us!

Text RETREAT to 833.235.9706 for updates on registration

The Year Ahead

Get these important dates into your family calendar!

August

- 9th - Bowling with Youth Council
- 16th - Parent Meeting during Sunday Night Gathering

Sunday School on August 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

Sunday Evening Gatherings on August 2, 16, 23, and 30

Identity Small Group on August 5, 9, 12, 19, and 26

October

- 4th - Fall Break (No Sunday Night Gathering)
- 9th - 11th - Fall Retreat at Ridge Haven (No Sunday Night Gathering on 11th)
- 25th - Operation Christmas Child Packing Night during Sunday Night Gathering

Sunday School on October 4, 18, and 25

Sunday Evening Gatherings on October 18 and 25

Identity Small Group on October 14, 21, and 28

December

- 6th - Hot Cocoa Meet-up after North Augusta Christmas Parade
- 13th - Delivering Fruit Baskets to Grace UMC Shut-ins and Christmas Party

Sunday School on December 6, 13, and 20

Sunday Evening Gatherings on December 6 and 13

Identity Small Group on December 2, 9, and 16

September

- 6th - Labor Day Weekend (No Sunday Night Gathering)
- 27th - Fall Break (No Sunday Night Gathering)

Sunday School on September 6, 13, 20, and 27

Sunday Evening Gatherings on September 13 and 20

Identity Small Group on September 2, 9, 16, and 23

November

- 18th - Serving at Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner
- 22nd - Serving at Hanging of the Greens during Sunday Night Gathering

Sunday School on November 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29

Sunday Evening Gatherings on November 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29

Identity Small Group on November 4 and 11

Many dates and plans are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, students' interests, etc. Additional events may be added to this list throughout the year.

The Year Ahead

Get these important dates into your family calendar!

January

- **17th** - MLK Jr. Weekend (No Sunday Night Gathering)
- **29th - 31st** - Revolution Youth Conference (No Sunday Night Gathering on 31st)

Sunday School on January 3, 10, 17, and 24

Sunday Evening Gatherings on January 10, 17, and 24

Wednesday Night Small Group on January 13, 20, and 27

February

- **7th** - Souper Bowl of Caring Fundraiser and Super Bowl Party during Sunday Night Gathering
- **14th** - Presidents Day' Weekend (No Sunday Night Gathering)

Sunday School on February 7, 14, 21, and 28

Sunday Evening Gatherings on February 7, 21, and 28

Wednesday Night Small Group on February 3, 17, and 24

March

- **8th** - Scholarship Applications available
- **28th** - Easter Weekend (No Sunday Night Gathering)

Sunday School on March 7, 14, 21, and 28

Sunday Evening Gatherings on March 7, 14, and 21

Wednesday Night Small Group on March 3, 10, and 17

April

- **4th** - Spring Break (No Sunday Night Gathering)
- **11th** - Masters Sunday (No Sunday Night Gathering)

Sunday School on April 4, 11, 18, and 25

Sunday Evening Gatherings on April 18 and 25

Wednesday Night Small Group on April 14, 21, and 28

May

- **2nd** - Confirmation Sunday
- **9th** - Mother's Day (No Sunday Night Gathering)
- **16th** - Sunday Night Gathering Wrap-up
- **23rd** - Graduate Recognition Sunday

Sunday School on May 2, 9, and 16

Sunday Evening Gatherings on May 2 and 16

Wednesday Night Small Group on May 5, 12, and 19

Many dates and plans are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, students' interests, etc. Additional events may be added to this list throughout the year.

Join the Mission

The work of Grace Student Ministry can't happen without the help of caring adults who want to see our students feel **beloved** of God and **connected** to their community while being **formed** into disciples of Jesus, ready to be **sent** out into the world to love as He loved.

There are so many ways you can help...

- **Love feeding people?** → Join our Snack Supper Rotation.
- **Love cheering from the stands and making people feel seen?** → Join our Student Encouragement Network.
- **Love mentoring and supporting?** → Become a Small Group Facilitator, Confirmation Mentor, or a Sunday Night Shepherd.
- **Love goofing off and hanging out?** → Become a Sunday Night Activity Coordinator or Trip Chaperone.
- **Love organizing and planning?** → You are now Ms. Amber's best friend! Help keep our space or our future plans running smoothly.
- **Love talking to God?** → Be in prayer for the students and leaders in our Student Ministry, and for those we will interact with as we go out into the world.



Serving Sign Up

STUDENTS ARE THE CHURCH OF TODAY

Student Ministry isn't about preparing preteens and teens to *one day* serve God and the Body of Christ...we learn best by *doing*, today!



STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Worship Attendant

Students are invited to serve in worship by greeting, being a crucifer or acolyte, helping to collect the offering, reading Scripture, praying, leading Children's Moments, performing, or volunteering in the sound booth.

Youth Council Representative

Our Student Reps provide feedback and help make plans for the future of our Student Ministry.

Discussion Leader

Help guide the conversation during your Small Group or Sunday Night Gathering. Discussion Leaders will work alongside Ms. Amber to prep for an upcoming chat.

Game Master

Bring the fun by planning a game or activity for a Sunday Night Gathering. Game Masters will help to organize supplies and run the activity.
**All activities are subject to prior approval!

Youth Delegate to Annual Conference

The South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church's Youth Delegation program mentors high school students in learning about church leadership. Delegates also attend our annual legislative conference.

Vacation Bible School Assistant

Mentoring younger students during our annual Vacation Bible School week is a great way to live out your faith.

**Whatever else we can dream up together!
Is there something you have always wanted to do or try? Let's make it happen!**



Caring for Students Well

Because we believe every student is God's beloved child, Grace Student Ministry is committed to providing an environment where young people can be formed in their faith, connected to authentic Christian community, and sent into the world to reflect the love of Christ. Our Safe Sanctuary Policy helps create the secure, healthy environment that allows this kind of discipleship to flourish. Highlights of our practices include:

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

- background checks and training for all volunteers
- 2 unrelated, trained adults at all times
- visible, open environments for all activities

TRIPS & RETREATS

- info about schedules, lodging, transportation, & expectations is shared early
- updated liability forms required
- overnight events include trained chaperones, emergency preparedness, and clear accountability procedures

PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES

We understand that each student is unique. We collaborate with parents/guardians to offer necessary accommodations for medical, developmental, or emotional needs, ensuring that every student can participate safely and with dignity.



Let's Stay in Touch!

Student Ministry News

Get all the details and sign-ups in your inbox each week



Social Media



GraceYouthUMC

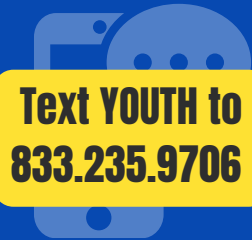
Our socials are a great place to see what we're up to



GraceUMCStudents

2-Way Text Messages

This is a great way to stay in touch with Ms. Amber about Student Ministry happenings



**Text YOUTH to
833.235.9706**

Student Ministry Website

A one-stop shop for all sign-up links and event details



Help Us Show Up for Your Kid!

This year, we are focusing on adopting the schedules of our students through our **Student Encouragement Network!** To help our students feel seen, a team of pastors and volunteers are ready to attend sporting events, debate competitions, dance recital, choral performances, etc. Share team/competition calendars with us so we can get your kid on the Student Encouragement Network's rotation.



Scan for more details

Grace Student Ministry - 2026-2027 Health Information & Liability

School Name	Grade

Child's Name: _____ Birthday: ____ / ____ / ____ Male ☐ Female ☐
Address: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: (____) ____ - ____ - ____ Family Email: _____
Guardian #1's Name: _____
Guardian #1's Information: (Cell) (____) ____ - ____ Phone (Work) (____) ____ - ____
Guardian #2's Name: _____
Guardian #2's Information: (Cell) (____) ____ - ____ Phone (Work) (____) ____ - ____
Fall '26 School Name: _____ Grade: _____
Home Church: _____

Dismissal Information - Please complete (use a separate sheet for additional people):

The following people are allowed to pick up my child if I'm not able:

Name _____	Phone _____
Name _____	Phone _____
Alternate Emergency Contact: _____	Relationship: _____
Phone: (Home) (____) ____ - ____	Phone: (Cell) (____) ____ - ____
Phone: (Work) (____) ____ - ____	

Medical insurance carrier: _____ Policy#: _____ Group#: _____
Carrier address: _____
Name of insured person: _____ Date of birth of insured person: _____
Insured person's place of employment: _____ Insured person's social security#: _____
Name of family physician: _____ Phone: (____) ____ - ____
Allergies/Food Allergies/Medical Conditions/Other : _____

Current medications: (List prescription, OTC & herbal)

Medication name: _____	Dosage: _____	Reason for taking: _____
Medication name: _____	Dosage: _____	Reason for taking: _____

Any other information you feel the leaders should know in advance about your child: _____

I give permission to Grace UMC for photographs and/or videos of my child, and my child's name to appear in church newsletter articles, the church website, and on social media outlets. Yes ☐ No ☐

My child has permission to attend Grace Student Ministry sponsored events/programs at Grace UMC 639 Georgia Avenue, North Augusta, SC 29841

Parent(s)/guardian signature _____ Date _____
Child's signature _____ Date _____

I (We) acknowledge that my child's participation in Grace Student Ministry programs may require involvement in activities that require physical exertion. I (We) acknowledge that my child's participation in any Grace Student Ministry program activities present risks that my child may suffer property damage, bodily injury, or death. Therefore, in consideration of my child's being allowed to participate in Grace Student Ministry program activities, I (we) agree to the following:

Student's Initials	Guardian's Initials	Liability Statements
		Grace UMC is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal belongings.
		I hereby take the following action for my child, myself, my executors, administrators, heir, next of king, successors and assigns: A) I waive, release, and discharge from any and all claims or liabilities for death or personal injury damages of any kind, which arise out of or related to my child's participation in Grace Student Ministry program activities, the following persons or entities: Grace UMC, its Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors, employees, volunteers, representatives, subcontractors and agents of any of the above; B) I agree not to sue any of the persons or entities mentioned above for any of the claims or liabilities that I have waived, released, or discharged herein except in the case of gross negligence on the part of Grace UMC, Grace staff or volunteers; and C) I indemnify and hold harmless the person or entities mentioned above from any claims made or liabilities assessed against them as a result of my child's actions. I hereby assume the risks of my child participating in all Grace Student Ministry programs.
		The undersigned _____ (parent/guardian), the parent and natural guardian or legal guardian of _____ (minor's name) hereby executes this document for and on behalf of the minor named herein. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the person or entities mentioned above for any claims or liabilities assessed against them as a result of any insufficiency of my legal capacity or authority to act for and on behalf of the minor in the execution of the Waiver and Release.
		I hereby authorize any licensed physician, emergency medical technician, hospital or other medical or health care facility to treat the minor named herein for the purpose of attempting to treat or relieve any injury received by said minor. I authorize any such Medical Provider to perform all procedures deemed medically advisable in attempting to treat or relieve any such injuries. I consent to the administration of anesthesia as deemed advisable. I realize and assume any such risk for and on behalf of myself and said minor. I understand that attempts will be made to contact me in the most expeditious way possible. Permission is also granted to Grace UMC representatives to provide the needed emergency treatment to the student prior to his/her admission to a medical facility.
		I give my permission to the staff and volunteers to administer first-aid, Tylenol/Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Benadryl/Diphenhydramine or over-the-counter antacids as needed.
		For your information, these are our rules of conduct expected from each student: ☐ Respect one another, staff, and adult leaders ☐ No fighting, weapons, fireworks, explosives ☐ Participation with the group is expected ☐ No alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping, or dabbing ☐ No lighters permitted ☐ Respect property ☐ No offensive or immodest clothing ☐ Respect and comply with event schedules ☐ No inappropriate comments or drawings related to fighting, weapons, blood, and or violence
		Failure to comply with these expectations could result in your child being sent home at your expense. <i>My child has permission to attend all church-sponsored youth activities as listed in calendars, Grace UMC newsletters, or social media outlets, including but not limited to the following:</i> hiking, biking, concerts, Bible studies, service projects, mini golf, hayrides, cookouts, boating, water-skiing, swimming, basketball, roller skating/blading, games in the park, soccer, paintball, gaga ball, ice-skating, volleyball, softball, baseball, camping, downhill skiing, snowboarding, snowtubing <i>Note: If it is your desire to limit your child's participation in any event, please submit your wishes in writing to Grace UMC prior to that event.</i>

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature(s) _____

Student's Signature _____



Every student...

...is created in the image of God.
...has gifts to share.
...has a place in God's Kingdom.

**We can't wait to discover together
what God has in store for this year!**



Rev. Amber Forrest

T: 833.235.9706

E: amber@gotgraceumc.org

L: 639 Georgia Ave., North Augusta, SC 29841

