



Congregational Update – Annual Conference Summary

June 18, 2024

OPEN HEARTS

OPEN MINDS

OPEN DOORS

Beloved Church,

The South Carolina United Methodist Annual Conference convened at the Greenville Convention Center, June 9–12, 2024, with our Resident Bishop, Rev. Jonathan Holston presiding. Clergy and lay delegates from across the state spent time together in worship, business, fellowship, and celebration.



As I reflect on the events of Annual Conference, a strong commitment to the UMC in South Carolina was evident. Discussions on the conference floor that demonstrated a readiness to move on from division and separation towards a unity and rebuilding in love and grace. And while there were 112 churches that left the denomination, we can celebrate that 715 local churches remain in the UMC connection.

I would say the highlight of this Annual Conference was my participation in the Commissioning, Ordination, and Retirement Recognition Service as the Worship Coordinator. We ordained 7 individuals, commissioned 7 to provisional status, and welcomed 3 more into special membership categories as clergy. I became acquainted with the members of this class as I helped them prepare for the worship service and stood over them as the bishop blessed and ordained them. I must say that the United Methodist Church is in good hands of these new clergy who demonstrated a wealth of spiritual gifts to share.

Lastly, I am glad to report that my appointment as your Lead Pastor at Open Hearts was fixed and approved at Annual Conference. I look forward to serving with you this next year with joyful expectation!

Your ministry partner,
Rev. Karen Jones
Lead Pastor

Bringing Open Hearts to Annual Conference

Thank you to our 12 volunteers who managed our table in the Exhibit Hall, and to our staff for providing materials for the table. We handed out copies of the newsletter, our last Celebration of Stewardship quarterly report, an invitation to our 1st Birthday Celebration, and an invitation to our **Vacation Bible School**. Our volunteers share comments from their experience below.

"Several delegates from small congregations...said they were so encouraged by our story and that they might be in touch...It was so gratifying to know that in a 10 minute chat, people took heart from our story." – Carol Wilson

"I was impressed by how many United Methodists from across the state knew our story and were cheering us on." – Beth Padgett

"It was inspiring to see and chat with fellow UMC members who were excited to be a part of this connected ministry. Folks were also very encouraging about our Open Hearts start-up, offering to pray for us as we move forward." – Donna Wilson



Bringing Leadership to the UMC

- Tom Creech, a member of the OHUMC Leadership Team, was nominated to serve on the Greenville District Board of Congregational Development.
- Ashley Newton, member of OHUMC, will continue as a member on the Trustees of the Annual Conference.
- Jana Clack, OHUMC Director of Operations, will continue as a member to the Greenville District Committee of Ordained Ministry.
- Rev. Dr. A.V Huff, a retired ordained elder here at OHUMC, was

nominated as the Conference Historian.

- Rev. Karen Jones was nominated as the First Assistant Secretary to the annual Conference Secretary, and will continue as a member on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry as well as the District Committee of Ordained Ministry as Registrar.

If you are interested in sharing your gifts with the UMC of South Carolina Annual Conference, please reach fill out this [form](#) from the conference website.

Other Notable Items from SC Annual Conference

- The SC Annual Conference collected 88.82% of apportionments, totaling \$14,560,530. To find out more about apportionments, click [here](#).
- Click the black button titled "2024–2025 Ministerial Appointments" on the [conference website](#) to discover the churches where clergy are assigned this year.
- 715 local churches remain United Methodist in SC, while 112 local churches separated from the United Methodist denomination using ¶2549 and The Separation Agreement with the UMCSC Annual Conference.
- The current Greenville District Superintendent (DS), Rev. Jim Dennis, retires at the end of the month. While the Greenville District lines and committees remain, the supervision of its ministers and churches will be shared between Spartanburg, Greenwood, and Anderson District Superintendents. Open Hearts UMC is assigned to the Anderson DS, Rev. Steve Patterson, who visited us in worship on June 9th.

Church Birthday Potluck

We are having a potluck lunch as part of our First Birthday Celebration. As you plan what dish you will be bringing, please consider being a part of our volunteer crew for set up and breakdown for the day. Click [here](#) for our Signup Genius.



Website : openheartsumcsc.org





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