BELONGING TOGETHER

Community, Conversation, Fellowship

Small Group Booklet

Service Groups

Active Faith

Contact: Deborah Rowe (rkrdtr@bellsouth.net)
Active Faith is comprised of volunteers responding to God's call to help those in need within our local community. God reveals to us the needs and we respond through our service and provision of needed goods. We work together as a group to support various programs, conduct community drives, and respond to emergency needs as a result of natural disasters or other situations. We meet in person 2-3 times a year for planning in addition to our active ministries. We rely on technology as our primary source of communication.

Adult Choir

Contact: Catherine Nance (catherine@wsmethodist.org)
Washington Street is known for its music ministries, not just as a way to reach the congregation but as a deeply spiritual experience for those who participate in choir. In the New Testament, we are encouraged, not just once, but twice (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) to sing God's praise with hymns and spiritual songs. Often, music can permeate our hearts and minds in ways that words cannot. Singing together is a wonderful way to enjoy deeply meaningful fellowship with other Christians. Also, it is just plain fun! We urge you to try choir! Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 PM and Sundays, 9:30 to 10:30 AM - Choir Room

Children's Choir

Contact: Catherine Nance (catherine@wsmethodist.org)
We will be coordinating with the leaders of children's church to provide time for music with the children. Occasionally, the children will be singing in the worship, either as a group or with the Sanctuary Choir. We will meet during Sunday service right after the Children's Moment and get out at 12 PM.

College Buddies

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org
Support college students from our church family by sending cards and care packages through the school year. Each buddy will be assigned one student, and the group will gather to assemble care packages together.

Funeral Reception Helpers

Contact: Mary Lide (neaudl@aol.com)
Set up, serve, and clean up for funeral receptions as needed. Donate baked goods, cookies, cheese wafers, etc.

Gracious Goodness

Contact: Mary Lide (neaudl@aol.com)
Gracious Goodness is a meal ministry for members in need of a “home-cooked” meal. We meet in the church kitchen to prepare and package meals 3-4 times a year. Meals are frozen and delivered to members by the pastors.

Inclusive Theatre Company of SC

Contact: Larry Hembree (larryhembree1@gmail.com)
The Inclusive Theatre Company of South Carolina empowers young people to create original theatrical productions that celebrate artists of all abilities. Each year, we produce two fully staged productions at Washington Street featuring inclusive casts made up of both able-bodied performers and performers with special needs. Through our partnership with Washington Street, our participants find a welcoming space to rehearse, perform, and shine—on stage and beyond. We are looking for both participants and mentors. No prior experience is necessary in order to participate, only the motivation to have some FUN!

Kitchen Crew

Contact: Mary Lide (neaudl@aol.com)
If you love being in the kitchen and spending time with great people, join this group. We do set up, serving, and clean up providing Christian hospitality for members and guests, for church dinners and receptions. We also have a lot of fun! You do not have to be available for every event.

Tabitha’s Table 2.0

Contact: Licia Jackson (jacksonliciad@gmail.com) or Ann Jessup (jessup.ann@gmail.com)

Tabitha's Table is now a project-based group without a scheduled meeting time. Persons who like to sew are invited to join us and will be contacted to work on sewing projects as they come up. Recently, we completed the VBS quilts. One of our next projects will be refurbishing/remaking the Three Kings costumes for adults. We also hope to work on a project with Mary's Maidens.

Washington Street Players

Contact: Larry Hembree (larryhembree1@gmail.com)

Are you age 12-112? Do you have fond memories of performing in your high school musical, a community theatre comedy or classic drama? Is there a spot on your bucket list that involves making people laugh, cry and think? Here’s your big chance! Join Director Larry Hembree to help create both funny and poignant theatrical moments during Sunday services, for holidays and other special events. No experience is necessary. A brief orientation will take place in September for interested folks.

Social Groups

Book Discussions

Contact: Christine Hait (chrishait@columbiasc.edu),Grant Jackson (cgrantjackson@gmail.com), Andrea McAtee (acmcatee21@gmail.com) and Monika Higgins (monikahiggins02@gmail.com

The WSUMC Reading Club brings together members of our church who love to read. Together we share our interest in all kinds of reading—novels, memoirs, short stories, magazine articles, poetry—and we enjoy the pleasure of being with other avid readers to discuss what we have read. A Book Swap once a year gives us a chance to exchange books and talk to each other about the reading we have been doing outside of the reading club. We get to know each other not only as fellow readers but as friends. Please join us! Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month.

Daytrippers

Contact: Rev. Alston Lippert (aflippert@umcsc.org)

Daytrippers is a group of people who like to see new things and have the ability to travel on weekdays. We go to places in the state, explore them, and have lunch. We carpool wherever we go, so you don't have to drive. Prospective trips for 2026/2027:

Civil Rights Museum and Edisto Memorial Gardens in Orangeburg

USC Lancaster Native American Center lunch at the Wagon Wheel in Fort Lawn

Caroliniana Library - Lunch- McCutchen House

Revolutionary War Park, Camden

Eudora Wildlife Safari Park, Aiken

Movie Discussions

Contact: Rev. Alston Lippert (aflippert@umcsc.org)

Movies are a way to connect with the culture and each other. They give us shared experiences to talk about. Our movie group meets once a month on the 4th Monday at 7:00 PM to discuss the movie of the month that we have all watched on our own. We will discuss how the movie pertains to the theme selected and how we see God and/or faith in the movie. The discussion lasts an hour and is held both in person in the Wesley room and online. This Fall, we will discuss movies about healing

Sole Mates

Contact: Sara Wilcox (wilcoxs@mailbox.sc.edu)

Sole Mates is a walking/hiking group for members and friends of Washington Street UMC. The group meets monthly on Saturdays around the Columbia area and occasionally in another part of the state. The group is open to persons of all abilities. Contact Sara Wilcox for more information.

Young Professionals (YoPros)

Contact: Jacob Valdez (jacob@wsmethodist.org) or Jane Polk (polk.jane.al@gmail.com)

Washington Street's young adult group (mid-20's to mid-40's) meets monthly for a game night and pizza with additional meetings for activities like Bible trivia, service projects, lunch-and-learn conversations, and more.

Sunday School Classes

Sunday school classes run from 10 AM - 10:45 AM.
To locate a class, there is a directory found near the elevator on the first floor.

Aldersgate Sunday School Class

Contact: David Anderson (danderson@richardsonplowden.com)
Facilitated by a dedicated leadership team, the class uses a variety of video and book based studies by popular Christian writers including Adam Hamilton, Bishop Tom Berlin, and Amy Jill Levine. Lessons focus on relevant contemporary messages and supporting each other through prayer and fellowship. Coffee and treats are always offered.

Children's Sunday School

Contact: Lee Haynes (lelandhaynesjr@gmail.com)
Opportunities for learning the stories of the Bible and growing in faith are offered for children on the 2nd floor beginning at 10 AM. Classes are divided according to the number of children attending. This year, the younger elementary class includes children who are 4 years old through 3rd grade. The older children's class is for children who are in 4th-6th grade.

Dawsey Sunday School Class

Contact: Demi Garvin (garvindemi@gmail.com)
Using a variety of book based studies, this is a self-taught large class, that also offers the opportunity to participate in the discussions when not able to attend in person by calling-in. They encourage each class member to take part and stay actively engaged in studies.

Grace Sunday School Class

Contact: Jim Lane (jlane@columbiasc.edu)
WSUMC's first reconciling community. A larger, adult school class that feels like a small group! The class is arranged with chairs in a circular pattern, and the style of the class is heavily discussion oriented. A rotating group of leaders choose topics from books, contemporary issues and personal experiences. All are welcome, and visitors and new members are encouraged to visit. Topics are listed in the Connections newsletter.

John Harper Sunday School Class

Contact: Boyd Saunders (jboydsaunders@aol.com)
This circle of older friends surround each other in good and difficult times, as they grow together in faith. Lessons focus on Bible-based studies using a standard adult curriculum with relevant messages.

Open Door Sunday School Class

Contact: Ann Jessup (jessup.ann@gmail.com)
The Open Door Class uses a discussion-based format for learning about the Bible. Members grow in faith through books, study materials and sharing of personal experiences and stories. Open to individuals of all ages, this class seeks to provide fellowship and mutual support, living up to its name to welcome individuals new to the church as well as persons who do not have a Sunday school home.

Paul Harmon Sunday School Class

Contact: Sally Mings (sallymmings@gmail.com)
This is a more intimate class open to all adults. Members and guest teachers take turns leading the class in a relaxed discussion format focusing on classical and contemporary issues of Christian faith and relevant life application.

Solomon's Porch Sunday School Class

Contact: Rev. Adrienne Fink (ajhamm@umcsc.org)
Led by Rev. Fink, this discussion-based class currently follows the church seasons in the liturgical year using scripture appropriate for each Sunday.

Youth Sunday School

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org)
Middle and High School students gather in the youth room on the 3rd floor on Sundays at 10 am to discuss life, the Bible, and how they are connected.

Study Groups

Disciple Classes

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org)
Learn more about the bible while growing closer with your siblings in Christ. Disciple Bible Study is a 9-month study with daily individual reading and weekly group meetings. The groups run from August through May with sign-ups during the summer months. The next round of Disciple classes will be offered beginning in August 2027.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Contact: Ann Jessup (jessup.ann@gmail.com)
The Wednesday Night Small Group meets via zoom at 7:00 PM for one hour each week throughout the year. The group welcomes members from within and outside Washington Street and explores a wide variety of scripture topics using books by Christian authors. The group studies materials marking liturgical seasons such as Advent and Lent, and then engages with other topics of interest during the year. Another key component is a focus on prayer for individuals and families struggling with life challenges. Participants are always warmly welcomed to join for a topic, a season or a regular schedule with us.

Combination Groups

Women in Faith Circles

Contact: Debra Schooler (debrajschooler@gmail.com)

The United Women in Faith is a sisterhood acting in faith to show God's love as we work to improve the lives of women, children and youth. Churches have Circles that meet monthly to study the Bible, to work on mission projects, and to learn about issues facing women and children in our state, our nation and our world. We come together in our Districts and States to meet, learn and fellowship together. We have the following circles at Washington Street:

Helping Hands Circle - Meets 1st Monday of each month at 6 PM (Contact: Debra Schooler [debrajschooler@gmail.com])

Charles Pfeifer Circle - Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM (Contact: Mary Lide [neaudl@aol.com])

Circle 9 - Join the women of circle 9 this year on a journey of faith and fellowship. We know life gets hectic, so we try to plan flexible meetings one weekday evening a month for fellowship and deepening our relationships with one another and Christ.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 24th at 6:30PM in the Washington St library. (Contact: Elizabeth Aravena [elizabeth.aravena@gmail.com] or Andrea McAtee [acmcatee21@gmail.com])

Toni White Circle - Meets the 2nd Thursday of the month at 5:30 PM (Contact: MJ Fox [mjfoxad@aol.com])

Diana Westerkam Circle - Meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM (Contact: Betty Cribb [bacribbs2@gmail.com])

Youth Group

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org)

Young people in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in Sunday youth group. The group meets in the Youth Room on the 3rd floor, twice a month, usually on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Regular meeting time will be 4:30-6:30 PM. The purpose of the group is to create space for young people to grow in their faith in God and experience a safe and caring Christian community. We play games, study the Bible, and do service projects as well as special events. Activities include things like planning the Fall Festival, Karaoke night, and a retreat. Sign up with a parent if you want to be on the group text and receive reminders about upcoming gatherings.

New Opportunities

Short-Term Bible Studies

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org)

For a variety of reasons, many people who want to study the Bible can't commit to a 9-month study like Disciple. If you are one of those people, please sign up here. We will organize 4-6 week studies around the schedules of people who are interested.

Life/Growth Studies

Contact: Rev. Kathy James (kljames@umcsc.org)

Sign up here and indicate your interest if you would like to participate in short-term studies such as these:

Parenting

Raising Christians

Understanding Dementia

Death and Dying

AI and faith

We are also looking for suggestions of topics to discuss. So if you have any ideas, please let us know!

We will organize 4-6 week studies around the scheudles of people who are interested.

Find a group that feels right for you?

Sign-up with the QR code below!

