

SOUTH CAROLINA UNITED METHODIST CAMPS & RETREAT MINISTRIES

Purpose:

SCCARM joins the church to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” by seeking, welcoming, and gathering persons into the community of the body of Christ through outdoor camping experiences to more than 5,000 guests annually at Asbury Hills, Camp Providence, and now the new Sea Islands Camp & Retreat Center.

Key moments from the previous year:

Kids, Parents, and Staff have never been more pleased to see camp back into full swing! The exhale along a walk in the woods is exactly what was needed after continued recovery from the pandemic. Thank you God for your love and grace! And thank you to all who continued to believe in the impact of a positive camp experience and to all who continue to support Camps and Retreat Ministries through your prayers, volunteerism, and financial gifts. Mental health challenges amongst our youth was the most common issue we and most camps faced in 2023. As I have often said, camp used to be a nicety, but now has become a necessity for kids to be connected face to face in the out-of-doors, under the canopy of God’s incredible creation. Camp is a unique opportunity to support and steward adolescents as they practice navigating a lived experience with others. In this model of care, we understand it is a privilege to support one another through troubled waters. We see this idea represented in Galatians 6:2, where Paul says, “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” We must be fully present to walk with someone through an emotional experience and practice compassion for both the individual and ourselves. Camps and Retreat Ministries is here for you! Take advantage of these marvelous places set apart to experience God! Come camp with us!

Objectives for the coming year:

In the last 10 years the ministry has tripled in growth. We have also acquired and opened a small 74 bed overnight camp (Sea Islands Camp & Retreat Center) on John’s Island.

Summer camp at Asbury Hills continues to be strong, in April 2022, Asbury Hills summer camp was voted once again by Newsweek to be one of the top camps in the US, in Summer 2023 was a season of transition and growth for our staff and campers. Many members of our community tried new things or stepped into new roles. We ran a Pop-up Camp in partnership with the Florence District for the first time and had the opportunity to introduce camp fun to over 80 people right in their hometown. Campers at Asbury and in Florence learned how to set an example through how they live their life as outlined in 1 Timothy 4:12. 2023 brought South Carolina Camps and Retreat Ministries an abundance of life changing experiences. From the mountains to the lake, to the sea, lives were changed as people found incredible opportunities to experience and grow in their relationship with God. 98% of campers gave camp a positive rating. 95% of campers tried something new. 96% of campers stated that they learned something new about their faith. While 98% of campers stated that they felt closer to God as a result of their experience at camp.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

South Carolina United Methodist Camps & Retreat Ministries would like to thank everyone for their continued support of this most important program in this day and time.

Narrative:

2023 was also a year of transition for Asbury Hills as new full-time staff joined the team. Mark Brantley joined us as Facilities Director in February. Paul Fish joined us as Food Service Director in July. Katie George joined us as Reservation Specialist in August. After 7 tremendous years of service to Asbury Hills, we said farewell to Sarah Moseley, former Summer Camp Director, as she ventures into her next chapter. Asbury Hills welcomed Ann Marie White in August as our new Summer Camp Director. The full-time staff and board of directors are excited about the energy this staff brings to serve all people for Christian birth, growth, and renewal. In 2023, Sea Islands Camp and Retreat Center and Camp Providence welcomed more groups than ever before. It has been amazing to have these properties full of life. Watching the dolphins as the sun sets on Bohicket Creek and hearing excited squealing of kids tubing on lake Hartwell is just the beginnings of the transformative power of these two properties. More information on Sea Islands and Camp Providence and how they can serve the people of South Carolina can be found on our website or by request. As we look to 2024 and beyond South Carolina United Methodist Camps and Retreat Ministries is committed to providing holy places that are set apart for all people to commune with God.

Respectfully submitted:

Arthur W. Spriggs, Executive Director
director@sccarm.org, 8642980125