

BISHOP APPOINTS 3 NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS, DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION



Bishop Leonard Fairley, resident bishop of the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, has appointed three new district superintendents – Rev. James Friday, Rev. Megan Gray, and Rev. Tiffany Knowlin Boykin. The appointments are effective June 24, 2026.



Rev. Friday

Florence District Superintendent Terry Fleming, Spartanburg District Superintendent Cathy Mitchell, and Anderson District Superintendent Steve Patterson will receive new appointments on July 1, having completed their tenure as district superintendent.



Rev. Gray

The Annual Conference voted in a special session in October to restructure the districts, reducing the number to 10 from 12, effective July 1, 2026. That results in the dissolution of the Florence and Greenville districts. Also beginning July 1, the Walterboro District will have its own full-time district superintendent, after two years of shared leadership by other superintendents.



Rev. Knowlin Boykin

Rev. Friday, Rev. Gray and Rev. Knowlin Boykin are expected to be appointed to serve in the Anderson, Spartanburg, and Walterboro Districts.

DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION & STRATEGY

Bishop Fairley also has appointed the Rev. Dr. George Ashford, pastor of Journey UMC in Columbia, as director of innovation & strategy – the part-time position created when the Annual Conference formed the reorganized Office of Congregational Excellence.



Rev. Ashford

That office will continue the work of the Office of Congregational Development within the new structure, and Rev. Ashford will lead that effort in a part-time capacity, while continuing his appointment at Journey.

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

JAMES FRIDAY



Rev. Friday has served as the conference director of Congregational Development since 2019. He was born in Timmonsville, South Carolina, and graduated from Francis Marion University in 1992 with a bachelor of science degree, having majored in sociology, with a minor in psychology.

Rev. Friday was ordained in 2000 following his 1997 graduation from Duke Divinity School with a master of divinity degree. He also completed the Duke Divinity School of Congregation Development and attended the Royce and Jane Reynolds Program in Church Leadership.

Before his appointment as director of Congregational Development, Rev. Friday served Francis Burns United Methodist Church in Columbia, John Wesley UMC in Greenville, Easley Chapel and John Wesley UMCs in Easley, and St. Michael UMC in Kingstree. He also has served as district superintendent in the Greenwood and Florence districts.

In addition to Rev. Friday's work in local churches, he has served on district and conference boards and committees on Congregational Development, Ordained Ministry, Connectional Ministries, Church and Society, and the Conference Journal. He has been a member of the Conference Board of Camps and Retreat Ministries and the Francis Marion University Wesley Foundation Board, as well as a trustee for Rural Mission Inc., the Methodist Manor of the Pee Dee, and Wesley Commons.

In the community, Rev. Friday has worked with a ministerial group for the Keenan School Cluster, and in school partnerships W.G. Sanders Junior High School and John P. Thomas Elementary School.

Rev. Friday is married to Debra C. Friday. He enjoys reading, golf and fishing.



Rev. Friday

Director of Congregational Development

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

MEGAN GRAY



Rev. Gray has served as pastor of Saint Paul United Methodist Church in Spartanburg since 2024. She was born in Wichita, Kansas, and graduated from North Carolina State University in 2000 with a bachelor of arts degree in religious studies, with a minor in Spanish. She also is a graduate of the Royce and Jane Reynolds Program in Church Leadership.

Rev. Gray was ordained in 2007 following her 2004 graduation from Duke Divinity School with a master of divinity degree. Before her appointment to Saint Paul UMC, Rev. Gray served Bethel UMC in Spartanburg, Cokesbury UMC in Charleston, Epworth Memorial UMC at Epworth Children's Home in Columbia, and Cayce UMC.

In addition to Rev. Gray's work in local churches, she has served in many ways, including on district and conference boards and committees on Ordained Ministry, Connectional Ministries, Racial Reconciliation, Hispanic/Latino Ministry, and the Superintendency. She has been a trustee of Epworth Children's Home, and a member of the South Carolina Methodist Conference Credit Union Board of Directors.

In the community, Rev. Gray has worked with the Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty in Spartanburg, Reading Partners in Charleston, and the Charleston Area Justice Ministry.

Rev. Gray is married to the Rev. Brad Gray, pastor of Bethel UMC in Spartanburg. They have two children, Isaac and Blaine. She enjoys hiking, reading, golfing, road trips with family, and the outdoors.



Rev. Gray

Saint Paul UMC-Spartanburg

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

TIFFANY KNOWLIN BOYKIN



Rev. Knowlin Boykin has served as pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Columbia since 2015. She was born in Marion, South Carolina, and graduated summa cum laude from Columbia College in 2003 with a bachelor of science degree in chemistry, and from Georgia State University in 2008 with a master of science degree in urban policy studies.

Rev. Knowlin Boykin was ordained in 2009 following her 2006 graduation from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University with a master of divinity degree. Before her appointment to Wesley UMC, Rev. Knowlin Boykin served as pastor of College Place UMC in Columbia.

In addition to Rev. Knowlin Boykin's work in local churches, she has served in many ways, including on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and the Columbia District Board of Church and Location. She has taught in the Religion Department at Columbia College, and has worked with the Southeastern Jurisdiction United Methodist Volunteers in Mission. She was elected as a delegate to General Conference in 2012, 2016, and 2020/2024.

In the community, Rev. Knowlin Boykin has served as a trustee for Columbia College, the Sisters of Charity, and Habitat for Humanity.

Rev. Knowlin Boykin is married to Kareem Boykin. They have a son, Kaleb. She enjoys watching Marvel movies, live theater, and spending time with family and friends.



Rev. Knowlin Boykin

Wesley UMC-Columbia

DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION & STRATEGY

GEORGE ASHFORD



Rev. Ashford has served as pastor of Journey United Methodist Church in Columbia since 2007. He was born in Columbia, South Carolina, and graduated from South Carolina State University in 1991 with a bachelor of science degree in marketing.

Rev. Ashford was ordained in 1997 following his 1995 graduation from Gammon Theological Seminary with a master of divinity degree. He also earned a doctor of divinity degree from Columbia Theological Seminary. Before his appointment to Journey UMC, Rev. Ashford served as a conference congregational specialist, and as pastor of Silver Hill Memorial UMC in Spartanburg and the Pickens Charge.

In addition to Rev. Ashford's work in local churches, he has served in many ways, including on the Conference Committee on the Episcopacy, and on Conference and District Boards of Ordained Ministry. He also has served as a delegate to Jurisdictional Conference.

In the community, Rev. Ashford has served as a member of the South Carolina National Guard, and as a member of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission.

Rev. Ashford is married to Olisa Jordan Ashford. They have two adult sons, George Jr. and Geordan, and one granddaughter, Gabriella Grace. He enjoys walking and reading.



Rev. Ashford

Journey UMC-Columbia