

PATRENA MIMS

Executive Director, The Bethlehem Center

<https://www.bethlehemspartanburg.org/>



With more than 30 years of leadership in housing, family self-sufficiency, and community transformation, Patrena Mims has become a driving force for equity and progress in Spartanburg. As Executive Director of the Bethlehem Center since 2011, she has guided the organization from the edge of closure to a thriving community anchor central to the Spartanburg Movement 2030 vision.

Patrena's expertise bridges lived experience and systems knowledge. Her career began as a HUD Certified Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator, later expanding to program management roles where she advanced housing stability, eviction prevention, and early childhood services. At Tobias Booker Hartwell's Campus of Learners, she co-designed pathways to college and career readiness while strengthening family supports.

At the Bethlehem Center, she launched the Highland Early Learning Center in 2021, filling a decades-long gap in early childhood education. She has expanded the Center's reach to include youth, family, and senior programming in behavioral health, financial wellness, academic success, and navigation services. Under her leadership, staffing has more than doubled, systems have been modernized, and the Center is preparing for its most ambitious project yet—a new facility to serve as a hub of hope, reinvestment, and collaboration for the Highland community.