

# The United Church of Idaho Springs, Colorado

The United Church of Idaho Springs, in affiliation with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church, is a Christian family of faith that celebrates God's presence. It is our mission to love and serve others with open hearts and minds and we invite all persons to join us.

## CHURCH PROFILE

March 20, 2011

The United Church of Idaho Springs, Colorado  
Presbyterian (USA)/United Methodist

PIN: 9661

Address: 1410 Colorado Boulevard  
P.O. Box 3070  
Idaho Springs, Colorado 80452

Date Church was Organized:	First Presbyterian Church, Idaho Springs	1870
	United Methodist Church, Idaho Springs	1868
	The United Church of Idaho Springs	1969

Telephone: 303-567-2057 (church office)

Position: Temporary Supply Pastor

The United Church of Idaho Springs is a regrouping, transforming congregation called to serve the community of Idaho Springs and nearby areas of Clear Creek County Colorado. We're regrouping again because our membership has fluctuated over the years as the community and society have changed and as we have gone through changes in pastoral leadership. We're transforming because we believe it's time for the members of this community of faith to assume greater responsibility for leadership in the church and community. We're looking for a temporary supply pastor to join us in this ministry.

We will

- 1) Manage church buildings and finances
- 2) Link people to counseling and other services.
- 3) Visit and support hospitalized or shut-in members of the congregation.
- 4) Learn how to become church leaders from our new pastor
- 5) Assume responsibility for the overall direction and functioning of this community of faith

We seek a pastor who will

- 1) Preach the Word and Administer the Sacraments including
  - a. Prepare material for the bulletin
  - b. Plan with the Worship Committee
  - c. Share worship leadership with members
- 2) Conduct/Participate in special worship
  - a. Participate in planning and leading 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ecumenical Worship
  - b. Officiate and wedding and funerals and other special occasions
- 3) Provide emergency pastoral care in coordination with the Council and refer people to counseling and social service agencies
- 4) Attend and advise Council
- 5) Educate Council and members about church leadership roles, responsibilities and teach them skills to fulfill their roles

Signs of our regrouping and transforming are the facts that last summer we felt internal tension in the congregation, membership continued to decrease, attendance was dropping, choir had dissolved, and committees were not functioning. Before the end of the year, the Finance Committee had revitalized itself including preparing more informative and accurate financial reports, planning and conducting a Stewardship Campaign (one we felt very good about), and communicating the financial condition to the congregation.

We are disappointed that we do not have resources to pay either a full-time or a part-time pastor, but since

- 1) Attendance has increased from 20 in August, to an average of 40 by the end of the year (with 80 attending Christmas Eve)
- 2) People who had left are visiting again
- 3) A positive feeling and contagious energy are evident when we gather
- 4) We held a seven-week series of after-worship planning meetings (meetings that began with 20 and grew to as many as 35 participants) that were so positive we've decided to continue with them in 2012
- 5) Vocalists and musicians have stepped up to provide worship music leadership

We hope we'll be regrouped and transformed enough to seek a part-time pastor within a year.

We're excited and we're looking for someone to share our excitement. We're committed to each other and place a high value on building and sustaining relationships. We're committed to serving our community. We know we have a lot to learn. We labor with a committee structure that has more committees than we have people to populate them. And we know God loves us and believe God is calling us to continue and extend the ministry of this historic congregation. We've attached a detailed description of the congregation.

The United Church of Idaho Springs is a congregation serving the communities surrounding Idaho Springs and nearby areas of Clear Creek County, Colorado. The church is located in the center of Idaho Springs, an historic mining town about 30 miles west of Denver, one block from the business district and two blocks north of I-70.

The United Church is a combined congregation of two historic local churches: the Idaho Methodist Episcopal Church, later the United Methodist Church of Idaho Springs, established September 3, 1868, and the First Presbyterian Church of Idaho Springs, established March 6, 1870, by the Reverend Sheldon Jackson, Presbyterian minister and Superintendent of Missions for the Rocky Mountain Territories. The union of the two congregations was approved in 1969 by the governing bodies of the United Methodist Church (Rocky Mountain Conference) and the Denver Presbytery for the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The United Church owns three buildings in Idaho Springs: The United Church building at 1410 Colorado Blvd, the former Presbyterian Church; the United Gathering Place at 1422 Colorado Blvd, formerly a private house; and the United Center at 1440 Colorado Blvd, the former Methodist Church. All buildings are accessible to the handicapped.

Weekly worship services are held at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary of The United Church building, the sanctuary area dating from 1871. These facilities have been updated and expanded over the years with relatively recent additions of a new narthex, great hall, kitchen, classrooms and meeting rooms, nursery, pastoral office, and restrooms. The Sanctuary is small (pews hold about 100 persons comfortably) with an opening to a side alcove (another 30+), and is equipped with a piano, a small organ, and a sound system. The choir and other musicians provide music for worship services. This building is used for regular and special worship services, funerals and weddings, child care and adult Bible Study groups; it also provides meeting spaces for many community service groups: Women's Quilting Group, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Boy Scouts, Mothers of Preschoolers, Clear Creek County Juvenile Review Board, Venturing Crew, and private music lessons.

Located directly to the east of this building is a former private house called The United Gathering Place (or the White House). Acquired in 2006, this old house is used primarily for Sunday School and other youth activities, church committee meetings, computer workshops, and groups such as Al-Anon and Narcotics Anonymous.

The United Center, a decommissioned Methodist Church building dating from 1881, is used for secular gatherings and special services including community ecumenical services, weddings and funerals, and as a public performance center (movies, musicians, plays, etc.). Financial support for maintenance and operation of this building comes from rental fees; it is managed by The United Center, a 501(c)3 corporation.

The United Church currently employs a part-time janitor and a part-time treasurer. Volunteer positions include a church secretary, a financial secretary, a nursery attendant and choir director/accompanists. The two most recent pastors (1999-2010) were from the United Methodist Church. The United Church had employed a full-time pastor until 2010 when the serving pastor voluntarily reduced her status to part-time. There are four other active churches

in Idaho Springs: Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran and Baptist. The Catholic priest and Baptist minister are the two full-time clergy in the area.

Like many churches, we have experienced a decline in attendance and receipts in recent years. Active membership has declined from a high of 168 members in 2007 to 73 members in 2010. Average Sunday worship attendance in 2011 is about 30 persons. The congregation ranges in age from young children to mature adults; the majority of worshipers fall in the 55+ age group. There are a few members in our congregation with school-age children but most are families without children at home or made up of single persons.

Because this is a federated union of two church denominations, the governance is a bit different from a typical Presbyterian Church. The United Church governing body is comprised of a seven-member Council with three or four members elected each year for a two-year term. This body is chaired by a member elected from the Council membership; the pastor is advisor to the Council. The Council meets monthly on a Wednesday evening.

The Council oversees the work of all committees, including the following: Staff/Parish Relations, Membership, Worship and Order, Christian Education; Finance, Auditing, Nominating, and Property. A few members in the congregation are previously ordained Presbyterian Elders; one serves as Denver Presbytery Commissioner. Many members contribute to the work of the church in the local community.

The church budget for 2012 is \$71,350, to be approved at the Annual Meeting in January 2012.

The United Church has served the local community for over 140 years through its Presbyterian and Methodist denominations. It has been a vital and steady influence in the community. It is a friendly church and welcomes all who come to worship. The church serves a diverse community and there is a vibrant expression of faith among members of the congregation. Current members of the congregation exhibit a strong commitment to the future of this church in the local community.

Since August of 2011 United Church has been served by an Interim Pastor. During the interim's tenure the church has grown in Sunday Worship attendance to an average attendance of 40. In past years the congregation had met with little success with Stewardship Campaigns, having very few congregants who would pledge. Previous pastors had been told "This isn't a pledging church". This fall the congregation was enlightened by the success of this year's Stewardship Campaign. To date 17 pledges have been received. Prior to last fall there was obvious conflict and arguments within the congregation. Happily that discourse has now disappeared. Congregants seem to be healing from the past and working together with a common goal to grow the church. It is truly exciting to see this renewed commitment to United Church.