



Central  
United  
Methodist  
Church

**4373 Galley Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80915  
(719) 597-6642**

**History of the Church  
1887-2008**

**DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF LUCILLE SAMS**



**Lucille Sams  
1915 — 2008**



## PREVIOUS & PRESENT PASTORS

<u>PASTOR/CHURCH NAME</u>	<u>DATES</u>
<b>Reverend W. E. McCormick</b> • <i>Tourist Memorial Mission Church (Unchartered)</i>	1887 – 1895
<b>Reverend J. Oliver</b> • <i>Tourist Memorial United Brethren in Christ Church (Chartered)</i>	1895 – 1911
<b>Reverend Henry Kohler</b>	1911 – 1915
<b>Reverend R. J. Parret</b>	1915 – 1916
<b>Reverend I. A. Chivington</b>	1915 – 1916
<b>Reverend W. G. Schaefer</b> • <i>First United Brethren in Christ Church (1916)</i> • <i>First Evangelical United Brethren Church (1946)</i>	1916 – 1957
<b>Reverend George L. Edie</b>	1957 – 1963
<b>Reverend Bruce Grauberger - (Asst. Pastor)</b>	1958 – 1959
<b>Reverend Paul Gamber</b> • <i>Central United Methodist Church</i>	1963 – 1970
<b>Reverend Tom Bennanzer</b>	1970 – 1971
<b>Reverend Keith Spahr</b>	1971 – 1988
<b>Reverend Marv Vose</b>	1988 – 1994
<b>Reverend George "Skip" Perry</b>	1994 – 1999
<b>Reverend Richmond "Rich" Stoakes</b>	1999 – 2003
<b>Reverend Judith M. Owsley</b> - (Minister of Congregational Development)	2003 - Present
<b>Reverend Granville D. Smythe, Jr.</b>	2003 - Present

In 1887, our church began life as a mission church, originally called the *Tourist Memorial Mission Church*. It was located on East Las Vegas Street in Colorado Springs. *Reverend W. E. McCormick*, a pioneer minister who was living in Colorado Springs, founded it. At this time the church was composed primarily of "United Brethren in Christ" folks, but the church was not yet chartered.

*Reverend J. Oliver* became the pastor in 1895. At the same time, the church was chartered with the Conference, and its name was changed to *Tourist Memorial United Brethren in Christ Church*.

The church remained on Las Vegas Street for a few years and then moved to the upper floor of an old store building on the corner of Costilla and Tejon. Property was later purchased at 417 S. Cascade, and a frame church/parsonage was built. This church was later sold to the Sons of Israel.

During the year 1911, *Reverend Henry Kohler* was appointed as pastor. After selling the property to the Sons of Israel, another parcel of property at the corner of South Nevada and East Vermijo Street was purchased for \$6,000. The congregation consisted of 200 members at the time. While the basement was being dug, a big tent was placed on the lot for church services. Several times the tent was damaged by strong winds, but the women of the church brought their sewing machines, heavy cord and needles, and repaired the tent prior to Sunday services.

From 1911 – 1915 all went well, until problems erupted in the church and split the congregation. A large percentage of the membership left, leaving only 27 families who worshipped in the covered basement under the supervision of *Dr. R. J. Parret*. Later, a license to preach was issued to *Reverend I. A. Chivington*. He remained pastor until 1916.

In June 1916, *Reverend W. G. Schaefer*, who had just graduated from Bonebrake Seminary, and ordained as an elder, was sent to become the pastor. The church was still called the Tourist Memorial Church, but because of the extended period of time the basement stood unfinished, the local community dubbed it "The Hole-in-the-Ground Church."

A plea went out from *Reverend Schaefer* and church members, for the community to join in the campaign of "Buy A Brick" so the church could be completed. There were 200,000 bricks sold, along with many financial gifts contributed to the campaign. A loan from the Church Erection Society in Dayton, Ohio, resulted in the church being completed along with a five-room parsonage. That church still stands today at Nevada and Vermijo, across from the Pioneer Museum. During 1916, the name was changed to the *First United Brethren in Christ Church*.

Church membership grew under the leadership of *Reverend and Mrs. Schaefer*. Everyone knew Walter G. Schaefer citywide and in the nearby countryside. He was a friend to all. Mrs. Mary Johnson attended the church as early as 1909, and she and her two daughters, Carrie and Mabel, preserved much of the church history by making scrapbooks. Organizations in the church were the Women's Missionary Society, Cradle Roll Department, Home Department, and the Ladies Aid Society. The Ladies Aid served "Penny Dinners", on the first and third Thursday of each month. Later, the dinner became known as the famous Thursday Chicken Pie Dinners. From a penny, the price was now 25 cents per slice. The dinners paid for many redecorating projects, mission projects, and helped the operating fund.

By 1942, Church and Sunday School membership had increased, and space was at a premium. Green Gables, two doors north of the church, was for sale. The Administrative Board voted to purchase the home as an Educational building. The purchase price was \$8,500. Sunday School membership was 475, and Church membership was 700. Many programs and activities were taking place, and the church was truly alive.

In 1946, serious talks had taken place between the Evangelical and the United Brethren Churches, with an agreement to merge the two denominations. The church then became the *First Evangelical United Brethren Church*.

In 1950, after selling Green Gables for \$60,000, the Administrative Board voted to build an Educational wing on the east side of the church. This was completed, and it was dedicated as the "Schaefer Christian Education Unit" in 1952. Again, there were more exciting times. Children's Melody Choir, Youth Choir, Chancel Choir, fellowship groups of all ages, and morning and evening services

On May 5, 1957, a celebration of "This is your Life" was held in honor of *Dr. and Mrs. W. G. Schaefer*, who was retiring. He served the church for 41 years.

In June 1957, *Reverend George L.* and Mrs. Helen Edie were assigned to the church during the Annual Conference in Sterling, Colorado. At this time, we were conducting two church services, fellowship for all age levels, Women's Society of World Service, Children, Youth, and Adult choirs, and home prayer group meetings.

*Reverend Bruce Grauberger* (and family) was appointed as an Assistant Pastor in 1958. Membership continued to grow. In 1960, the church sanctuary was redecorated and remodeled. The Edies were appointed to the First Evangelical United Brethren Church at Aurora, Colorado, during 1963, and *Reverend Paul Gamber* (and family) became our new pastor.

At the General Conference in 1968, held in Dallas, Texas, the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist church merged, and the new denomination was named the United Methodist Church. Because *First United Methodist Church* of Colorado Springs had been established in 1895, we were asked to change our name. Members submitted suggestions, a vote was taken, and in March of 1968 we became known as *Central United Methodist Church*.

At this time, our membership was beginning to drop and many of our members were moving to the northeast part of the city. In 1970 *Reverend Tom Bennanzar* (and family) was appointed to Central United Methodist Church, anticipating the retirement of *Reverend Paul Gamber* in 1971. At the same time, the Administrative Board, Rocky Mountain Conference, and church members were discussing a move for our church from the downtown area.

In June 1971, *Reverend Keith Spahr* was appointed to the church. By this time, a search for a new location had become serious, and plans were made to sell the building and buy property in a new area. A "For Sale" sign was placed in front of the facility, and we were beginning a new era in the life of the church. It was sold to the Police Training Academy in 1973. In the meantime, we were holding services in the Roosevelt Elementary school building. Sunday School was held in the gym, followed by church service. Property at the corner of Murray and Pikes Peak was given to us by the Rocky Mountain Conference, but after further study it was determined this property would not meet our needs and requirements.

December 1975 resulted in a temporary move to the Seventh Day Adventist School at 5300 Palmer Park, where Sunday School and church services were conducted while we worked on acquiring property north of Palmer Park Boulevard. Neighbors in the area opposed having a church built near that vicinity; so consequently 2 ¾ acres were later purchased at Emory Circle and Galley Road. Another move came in September 1976 when we transferred our services to Wilson Elementary School, remaining there until the Sanctuary was completed at our new home, 4373 Galley Road

The first service in our new home on Christmas Eve, 1976, was a celebration to be remembered. We began to grow immediately, and children's Sunday School classes were held behind dividers in the Sanctuary, along with adult classes. Youth classes took place in the Secretary's and Pastor's offices.

April 1984 witnessed construction of the Fellowship Hall. Many functions, including the Children's Sunday School, were then conducted there for 7½ years. Still in need of an educational unit, we put it on our want list. *Reverend Spahr* remained our pastor for 17 years and was then appointed as pastor at First United Methodist Church in Ogden, Utah.

*Reverend Marvin Vose*, his wife Caroline, and two children (Chuck and Ginie) were welcomed into the fold during July 1988. We experienced growth in worship and Sunday School. New adult classes were organized. Children's choir and three bell ringer choirs, plus a very active chancel choir, were in progress. A "Building Together in Faith" campaign was launched with plans for a new educational wing. We also decided to remodel both the chancel area and Fellowship Hall. One of the highlights of that campaign occurred when the entire congregation had their names written on small stones and they were able to gather around and place the stones in a bucket that was used to mix the first batch of cement. That cement was then used to lay the foundation of the Educational Wing. What an exciting day February 7, 1993, was as we moved our Sunday School classes into their new classrooms. Consecration Sunday was held on March 21, 1993, with *Bishop Mary Ann Swenson* delivering the morning message. Central was "on the move" again, but this time we remained at home, building together in Christ.

In June 1994, *Reverend Vose* was appointed as the District Superintendent of the Peaks and Plains District for the Rocky Mountain Conference. We said good-bye to the Vose family, and on July 1, 1994, *Reverend George "Skip" Perry* became our pastor, with his wife Mary, and children Mark and Laura. Looking forward to the year 2000 and our 105th birthday, we adopted a Vision Statement that read: *"God is calling Central United Methodist Church to establish such a dynamic and vital "Center of Caring" that those seeking Christian Fellowship and family are drawn to this place where God is joyfully celebrated as faithful and alive."* From 1994 until 1998, we also conducted a "Revisioning Campaign", continued small group Tender Loving Care (TLC) Bible Study groups in individual homes, implemented a contemporary (third) service during Sunday morning worship, and in the beginning of 1999, we also implemented a Tele-Care ministry program under the direction of *Pastor Skip Perry*.

In 1999, *Reverend Richmond "Rich" Stoakes* and his wife Susan began their tenure at Central United Methodist Church. That same year Pastor Stoakes commissioned the first group of Stephen Ministers, individuals who had completed 55 hours of training to provide one-on-one care and support for members of the church struggling with grief, illness, loss, etc. Pastor Stoakes and his wife Susan were involved in all aspects of Central's ministry.

For many years Central United Methodist Church had a tradition of releasing white balloons on Easter Morning. Children put their names and the church's address inside a balloon; then released them to see which one would travel the greatest distance. On Easter Sunday, beginning in 2002, we had our first ever youth-led Sunrise Service. Fifty-five people attended, with breakfast following the celebration.



The year 2002 and 2003 were great years of growth, innovation, challenges, and changes. Central United Methodist Church recognized two of their 50-year members for their many contributions and involvement in the church by renaming a portion of the church as the "Paul and Lucille Sams Christian Education Wing"

A visioning process that began in 2000 called *Focus 21* resulted in identifying several priority items for the church including a van, air conditioning, and an associate pastor. We got the much needed air conditioner in the sanctuary, and Bob Teets graciously donated a van for ministerial and transportation needs. Our prayers and a lot of hard work were rewarded when *Reverend Judy Owsley* was hired in February 2003. She and her husband Bud joined us, from First United Methodist Church in Colorado Springs, and they both immediately became a vital part of our ministry. As our Minister of Congregational Development, *Rev. Judy* has fostered groups for young adults, families with children, grief recovery, and Bible study, as well as leading our Stephen Ministry program.

Our "Memorial Book" was created in 2003 to depict the many contributions that friends of Central have donated or bequeathed to the church, as a perpetual testimony to loved ones.

In 2003, Pastor Stoakes was appointed to serve the United Methodist Church of Rifle, CO, and we reluctantly bid them farewell. *Reverend Granville D. Smythe, Jr.* and his wife Charlene joined us in July 2003, enriching our church with their experience, vitality, and spirituality. *Rev. Gran's* ministry has encompassed 40 years of serving the Lord, including churches in Loveland, Limon, Parker, Longmont, and Colorado Springs.

Charlene was an active participant in the ministry of Central prior to receiving an appointment in 2005, as a local pastor, to serve the Bethel UMC and also as a chaplain at the Youthful Offender System, both in Pueblo, CO.

In October 2004, *Rev Judy Owsley* made her 12<sup>th</sup> trip to Novgorod, Russia, representing the Russia Initiative of the General Board of Global Ministries. Central UMC had joined the Rocky Mountain Russia Initiative as a partner church in September 2003.

Numerous improvements were made to our church home in 2004 under the very able leadership of our Trustees and their chairman, Bob Morris. Improvements included the painting of the exterior of the building, installation of a drainage system to remove water from the south side of the church, a new roof, improved interior signage, and a new fence on the west side.

During 2005 and 2006 congregational support of missions increased remarkably, and our church entered a covenant relationship with Carol Partridge, a United Methodist missionary in Macedonia. The music department reorganized with new groups and a lighter schedule for the choir, all of which brought energy and inspiration to enhance both worship services.

Several new programs and ministries were begun, including “Caring Friends” who keep in touch with the WAVE (Wise and Valued Elders), Kids of the Kingdom (a children’s choir), Young Men’s Bible Study, and “Lunch and Lessons,” a monthly week-day program for the adults.

What a grand day April 24, 2005, was as six youth made a public profession of faith and were received into the membership of this congregation. The specialness of the day was heightened by the recognition of those members who have been a part of this church 50 years or more and the “passing of the torch” by the older members to the confirmands.

Christmas 2005 was most memorable with the special program, “The Grumpy Shepherd,” written by Lucille Sams and presented by preschoolers through senior high.

Heritage Sunday 2006 featured the presentation of a quilt made in the early 1930s with the names of members embroidered on the squares. Lucille Sams wrote a short historical drama to introduce the quilt.

On Heritage Sunday, 2007, a confirmation class of four young people joined the church and were welcomed by twelve 50-year members at a potluck held in their honor.



2005 Confirmands and Mentors



2007 Confirmands and Mentors

The Permanent Endowment Fund (PEF) of Central United Methodist Church was established during 2006 and approved by the Charge Conference on February 20, 2007. Central UMC established the PEF as part of its major long-range financial plan. The Endowment Fund's purpose is to provide members and friends opportunities to make charitable gifts to Central that will become a permanent endowment of financial support for missions and ministries not a part of the annual operating budget of the church.

An endowment is a permanent fund. Gifts received into the Endowment Fund will be invested, and only the income from the investment will be made available. Therefore, the fund's principle will continue to grow as contributions are received through the years. This is truly a gift that keeps on giving.

Two lasting and inspirational improvements were completed in early 2007. Gifts by the Burkholder Memorial Fund made possible the installation of porcelain tile in three entryways and included a beautiful cross and flame emblem created in tile at the south entrance.

A magnificent carillon, given by the Sams family and the Paul Sams Memorial Fund, was first heard in the church and throughout the neighborhood on Easter Sunday, 2007.



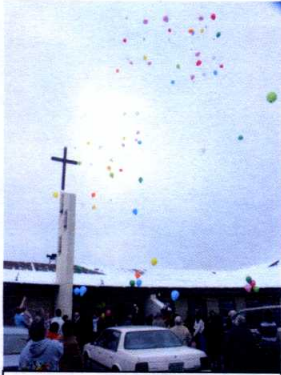
South Entryway Porcelain Tile



Carillon Chimes

Rally Day 2007 was held on the last Sunday in August, a change from the traditional second Sunday in September, in order to more closely coincide with opening of schools in mid-August. A great celebration was enjoyed after worship with picnic foods, indoor and outdoor games, bicycle games, and a drawing that gave away a bicycle or tricycle to every child and youth present.

The church reached out to the community as well as to our own children with the "Walk Through Bethlehem," on December 1. In Fellowship Hall there were craft tents where children could make jewelry, candles, leather crafts and they could taste Bible-time foods, hear the Christmas story, and talk with a young couple and their baby portraying the Holy Family. In addition a free pancake breakfast was served and two Bible time animals, a donkey and a ram, were outside for rides and photos. Attendance was close to 100.

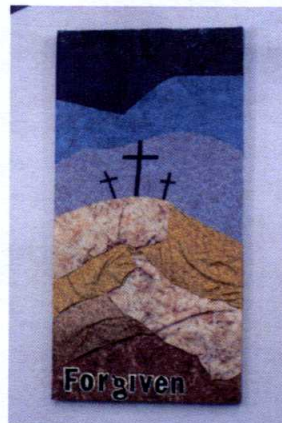


*Easter 2008*

In January 2008, the congregation was saddened when *Rev. Granville Smythe* announced that he would retire on July 1, 2008. On March 2, it was announced that *Rev. Larry Howard* had been appointed by the Bishop, effective July 1.

Easter, 2008, brought back a much-loved tradition of releasing balloons after Sunday School. The sanctuary was adorned with four vibrant new banners created by members of the congregation.

Heritage Sunday was dedicated to *Lucille Sams*, who passed away on March 12, 2008, and photos of the church's history were shown during worship, as well as dedication of the banners and other memorial gifts.



**50+ YEAR MEMBERS**



**Nora May Abendschan**



**Betty Burkholder**



**Linnie Chisman**



**Barbara Dausel**



**Mary Hawthorne**



**Lois Lucas**



**Dorothy Olson**



**Billie Mae Owings**



**Merry & Harold Palmer**



**Charlene Tusler**

# Photos of our Church

