

Getting Started with the New Find-a-Church

Find-a-Church now includes several open text areas for you to add personalization to your church's listing. This document will explain the information you can include, and provide guidelines on creating the most effective entries.

Writing Tips:

Staff from United Methodist Communications will be reviewing your entries before they are made public. Following these simple suggestions will decrease the time needed for the review process.

- Write for a reader who has no church background. Avoid jargon, abbreviations, denominational acronyms, and overly theological language.
- Use details and specifics whenever possible. Church words (like 'contemporary' or 'traditional') don't mean the same thing to everybody.
- Write in complete sentences.
- Compose your messages in a word processing program with spelling and grammar checks, then cut and paste into the Find-A-Church form.
- Be consistent from one text box to the next.
- Stick to word limits.
- Use HTML coding for basic formatting. Formatting such as bullet points, bold, underline and italics will be stripped away in the Find-a-Church fields. Here are two HTML examples you may want to incorporate in your text.
 - `
` at the end of a sentence for a hard return or blank line between sentences
 - `your words` BOLD

To begin the process of updating your Find-a-Church information, you will need your church identification number from the General Commission on Finance and Administration (GCFA). This will help United Methodist Communications' staff know that you are officially part of a specific local church. This number may be found on your Interpreter enrollment form from United Methodist Communications, by calling your district office or by emailing FAC@umcom.org.

Write your GCFA number here: _____ for future reference.

The Find-a-Church Information:

Mailing Address: This data comes from annual reports and cannot be changed directly from this website. Review this information for accuracy. If anything is inaccurate or out of date, you can have it changed by sending an email to FAC@umcom.org (be sure to include your GCFA number). Or, if you prefer, you can call INFOSERV at 1-800-251-8140.

Preferred Church Name:

Your church may have a common name used within the congregation and community. For example, First United Methodist Church of Morehead may be locally referred to as Morehead United Methodist Church.

Physical Address: This data comes from your existing Find-A-Church entry. Please double-check for accuracy and complete any blank fields.

Driving Directions: Find-A-Church uses Google Maps to provide directions and a printable map to your church building. Personalize directions with references to local landmarks (e.g., 'From the beach...' or 'From Town Center' or 'located at the corner of ...').

Email: This section is for a seeker-friendly email address. It is best to associate this email address with the church rather than an individual (i.e., info@yourchurch.org , not pastortim@yourchurch.org).

Web Site: Seekers will be able to connect to your church's website for more detailed information than we are able to include in Find-a-Church. Use the format, www.hillcrestumc.org (don't include the 'http://'). This will be a live link: anyone visiting your Find-A-Church page will be a click away from your website. If your church does not have a web page as an outreach ministry contact us at webtraining@umcom.org for information and resources on getting started.

Office Hours: Indicate your office hours as appropriate.

For example:

- Monday through Thursday, 8:00am to 3:30pm
- An hour before Sunday morning worship, Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00am to Noon
- Our church office is staffed by volunteers. Please leave a message if no one is available to answer your call.

Church Photo: Make sure the image is on your local computer, and click 'Browse' to navigate and insert.

This should be an original photograph (not an artist's rendering) with no copyright restrictions, at least 157 by 467 pixels, saved as either .jpg or .gif format that is optimized for the web (**or file size should not exceed 100 KB**). If your church photo includes persons under the age of thirteen, [print out this release form](#), get the appropriate signatures, and keep on file.

Worship and Sunday School Information:

To add a new worship time: click *Add New*.

Using the drop down menus, select the day, hour, minute (15 minute increments) and am or pm, for a worship service. You also have the option of adding a note to this entry. This note is not currently displayed but may be used in the future. If your church offers different styles of worship you may want to make that designation in this field. If you have more than one worship service during the week, you will be able to click *Add New* as many times as needed. Click *Insert* to submit your addition. An update note will appear on your Find-a-Church form displaying the information you have just added. If you need to make a change to this information click *Reset* at the bottom of the page and re-enter the date and time information.

To edit an existing worship day and time, click *Edit* next to the listing you want to change and make your changes in the new window.

To delete an existing worship day and time, click *Delete* next to the listing. You will be asked if you are sure you want to delete the entry. Click *Yes* to confirm.

If you have additional worship services during the week, include those dates and times in the section "What we offer" or "what to expect."

Welcome: Write a message of welcome from the congregation. Describe your vision as a church body. What draws people to your church? Limit your message to 150 words or less.

Sample Welcome Message

Welcome, and thanks for your interest in Trinity United Methodist. We believe that we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ in Greenville's Hillside community. That belief shapes everything we do, from our worship on Sunday mornings to our after-school tutoring program to our soup kitchen serving Greenville's homeless. We find that when we express God's love in the community around us, we experience God's love in a deeper way. That experience binds us together as a body.

Hillside is a diverse and vibrant community. Our congregation reflects that diversity, and that vibrancy too. We hope you'll visit Trinity and experience it for yourself. We'll be right here, where we've been since 1936—in the heart of Hillside.

What to Expect When You Visit: This is an opportunity to provide detailed information that will give first-time visitors an idea of what to expect on a typical Sunday morning

(limit 150 words). Consider the following:

- Worship style—would you describe your worship style as traditional? Contemporary? Blended? Be as specific as possible, since these terms mean different things to different people: “A full band leads worship” or “Traditional hymns usually alternate with praise choruses in our order of worship.”
- Length of the service, along with a brief order of the service.
- How to connect with someone at the church (“Ushers stand just inside the main entrance” or “There are always at least two greeters at our welcome kiosk in the main hall”).
- Availability of refreshments between/after services
- Dress. Will a visitor feel self-conscious if he doesn’t wear a tie? Or if he does?
- Nursery care and/or children’s church.

Sample ‘What to Expect’ Section

Sunday Services

Both Sunday Services usually last a little over an hour. We describe our worship style at Trinity as “blended.” We sing both traditional hymns and contemporary praise choruses. A praise band leads worship at the 11:00 service.

Arriving

Visitors park in the front row of the parking lot. Enter through the double doors closest to the visitors’ parking area. The greeters at the Welcome Kiosk will point you in the right direction and answer any questions you might have.

Come As You Are

Dress however you like. At Trinity you’ll see blue jeans and three-piece suits alike.

Bring the Kids

We provide a nursery for children under the age of five. A children’s sermon is incorporated into the main worship service. There is no separate children’s church.

Fellowship

Coffee and doughnuts are provided in the lobby after Sunday School hour and before the 11:00 service.

What We Offer:

Provide a list of the opportunities your church offers in addition to Sunday worship (limit 150 words). For example:

- Sunday School
- Bible Studies
- Men's and Women's Groups
- Age-specific programs (Children's ministries, youth group, etc.)

Sample 'What We Offer' Section

Trinity offers opportunities for personal, spiritual growth throughout the week:

Sunday school is for all ages! Sunday school meets at 9:45, between the two worship services.

We gather in the Fellowship Hall for supper on Wednesday nights. Then we move into smaller groups for study, with something for everyone. Children's and Adult's Choirs meet during this time, as well as Disciple Bible Study groups.

Our large and active youth group meets Wednesday nights after Midweek Supper. Church camp and a ski trip between Christmas and New Year's are annual favorites.

Men's Prayer Group meets Tuesday mornings at 6:30am.

Several women's Bible studies meet throughout the week.

For more information about these and many more opportunities, visit our website at www.TrinityGreenvilleUMC.org

How We Share Our Gifts: People who are interested in your church want to know more than what's in it for them. They want to know how they can give back. In this section, describe service opportunities offered by your church. (limit 150 words) Consider, for instance:

- Disaster relief teams
- Habitat for Humanity involvement
- Day care and after-school care
- Twelve-step recovery meetings held in the church
- Ministries to the homeless
- Youth and adult mission trips, including VIM trips.

Sample 'How We Share Our Gifts' Section

At Trinity, there is no shortage of opportunities to serve. Here's a small sampling of the ways we are involved in our community and beyond.

- Greenville Soup Kitchen
- Room at the Inn
- Hillside After-school Tutoring Program
- DivorceCare
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Greenville-Area Support Group for Parents of Special-Needs Children
- Habitat for Humanity (17 homes built since 1995!)
- Several short-term VIM mission trips each summer
- Three Katrina Hurricane relief teams sent to Louisiana and Mississippi

Once you've submitted your changes:

The information you have provided will be reviewed by the staff of United Methodist Communications and made available to the public in seven to ten business days. If we have questions about your entries, we'll contact the church via email or by phone.

Remember you can come back to update your Find-a-Church page any time using your GCFA number.

If you have questions or comments about Find-A-Church, contact us at FAC@umcom.org, or call 1-800-251-8140.