

## Worship Sundays at 10 AM

**Mailing Address:**

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[www.facebook.com/ucsjridgway](http://www.facebook.com/ucsjridgway)

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## UCSJ Staff

**Rev. Melinda Veatch** — Pastor

**Rev. Dick Engdahl** — Pastor Emeritus

**Deacon Bob Larson** — Minister of Missional Outreach

**Deacon Kathy Graff** — Minister of Spiritual Formation

**Anita Posey** — Administrative Assistant

**Katy Kristoffersen** — Director of Music

**Sue Stern** — Treasurer

**Laura Hagert** — Custodian

**Mike Kristoffersen** — Videographer

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## UCSJ Council

Rev. Melinda Veatch

Dennis Eliason

Kathy Graff

Pam Larson (Chair)

Dee Moore

Joan Moyer

Charlie Scholpp

Carolyn Snowbarger

Timothy Spangler

Angela Todd

Donna Whiskeman

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Newsletter Editor — Barb Eliason

Newslink Editor — Administrative Assistant  
([ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com))

External Publicity — Kate Kellogg

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## UCSJ Office Hours

**Tuesday and Wednesday — 9 AM to 2:30 PM**

**Thursday — 9 AM to 1 PM**



*The Word was first,  
the Word present to  
God, God present to  
the Word.*

*The Word was God,  
in readiness for God  
from day one.*

<sup>3-5</sup> *Everything was created  
through him;*

*nothing—not one thing!—  
came into being  
without him.*

*What came into existence  
was Life, and the Life was  
Light to live by.*

*The Life-Light blazed out of  
the darkness; the darkness  
couldn't put it out.*

—John 1:1-5 (*The Message*)

John opens his gospel with these words about Jesus. “In the beginning...” at the very start of everything “was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” John wants us to know that Jesus is God’s foundational Word. He’s no novice, no stranger to God’s ways. He has always been an integral part of God. In on the whole creation of creation from concept to formation to full-on life and all that has followed.

By this Word of God, the sun, moon, and stars were set in the heavens, and the boundaries were laid between waters and land. God’s Word spoke and filled the oceans with fish, the skies with birds, the soil with plants, and set animals roaming the plains, hills, valleys, and mountains.

This Jesus is God’s Word—God’s idea, God’s intention—for life that is truly life for the whole creation. He is not some newcomer to God’s interlaced latticework of living. This Word is the lattice on which everything thrives as it grows and breathes and lives each moment of each day.

As we walk into this new year, we walk with hopes for our lives and the world in the months that follow. We walk with relationships—some healthy, some not. We walk with fears and anxieties, with disappointments and with ongoing uncertainties. We walk with resolutions and expectations for change for ourselves and for others.

In all of this, the Word walks with us. The Word who has been part of God from the very beginning. The Word who knows the start—and the finish—of everything. The Word who has continued even as continents have shifted, seas have risen and fallen, eras have played out, rulers have gained and lost power, and the world has been riven with times of war and blessed with seasons of peace. Through droughts, famines and plagues, through verdancy, abundance, and health, the Word has walked and keeps on walking with us, bringing us new life.

At the beginning of this new year, may our resolution be to get in step and walk with the Word who has walked in the world with us from the very beginning. Because our hope is not in the new year or our resolutions or willpower. Our hope is in the One who makes all things new.

*Blessings,  
Melinda*

## Calendar for January

(For more information, see page #s)

Monday, January 1



Saturday, January 6 — 9 AM

Post-Christmas Clean up (pg. 3)

Sunday, January 7 — 10 AM

Communion

Tuesday, January 9 — 3 PM

Administrative Committee Meeting

Saturday, January 20 — 8:30 AM

Men's Breakfast (pg. 3)

Friday, January 26 — 10 AM

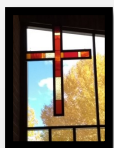
On the Same Page Book Club (pg. 4)

Monday, January 29 — Noon

Gals' Lunch at Kismet, Ridgway (pg. 4)

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## Weekly Activities



### SUNDAYS

10 AM — Worship Service (Communion is served the first Sunday of each month)

4:30 PM — Foundational Mindfulness (Begins January 7) (pg. 2)

MONDAYS — 9 AM (via Zoom)

Centering Prayer

### WEDNESDAYS

10 AM — Prayer Shawl Ministry

4:30 PM — Community Learning (Book Studies and 6 PM Soup Supper (Begins January 10) (pg. 4)

### THURSDAYS

9:30 AM (via Zoom) — Women's Bible Study

4:30 PM — Choir Practice

SATURDAYS — 8:30 AM (via Zoom)

Men's Bible Study

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Please email [ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com) or leave a detailed message on the church phone 970.626.5803.

For Address, phone, email changes, or if you wish to be removed from the church directory.

For Prayer Requests/Announcements for the Sunday bulletin (deadline is Wednesday at noon).

## December Administrative Committee Highlights

- November financials indicate giving has been steady and right on budget, however, expenses are up due mostly to building repairs that have been necessary. All ministries are asked to tighten their spending as much as possible.
- A new Xerox copier will soon be leased. The 5-year lease should save us about \$500/year. Thanks to Fred Quist for his research and recommendation.
- Tim Spangler and Denny Eliason reviewed our building insurance and recommended an increase in coverage to \$2M. The cost is being researched and will be part of the spring renewal of our insurance plan with Church Mutual.
- A shift from Century Link to Clearnetworx for our phone and internet service is being investigated.
- 2024-2025 budget items will include a review of building repairs as well as other items.
- Spring and summer programs are being planned.
- The next **Council Administrative sub-committee meeting will be 3 PM on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at the church**—please join us.

**We did it! Thanks everyone for your generous response to the staff bonuses. The gifts were wonderful and show just how much the staff is appreciated. Merry Christmas all!!**

## Coming in 2024!

UCSJ will be offering two new classes on mindfulness. Mindfulness is the ability to focus our attention fully on the present moment with acceptance and without judgment. Katy Kristoffersen, our multi-talented Music Director, will lead the two courses. You do not have to attend every session in a course—drop-ins are most welcome!

The first course, “**Foundational Mindfulness**,” will have six sessions, **which will meet at 4:30 PM starting on Sunday, January 7 and ending on Sunday, February 11**. Each session will open with a short (5-minute) meditation, followed by journaling, information presented by Katy on a facet of mindfulness, a group discussion, and closing with a second meditation grounded in the session's content. We will aim to be together for about one hour per session, focusing on bringing mindfulness into a specific category of life, such as attention, the body, and emotion.

The second course, “**Christian Mindfulness**,” will have five sessions, **which meet during Lent starting on Sunday, February 18 and ending on Sunday, March 17, at 4:30 PM**. This course will follow the same structure as the first course but will focus on specifically Christian topics relating to mindfulness.

These classes are open to all people in our community (not just church members), including teens. For more information visit [ucsjridgway.org/mindfulness](http://ucsjridgway.org/mindfulness). Please feel free to invite anyone you think might be interested.



## Treasurer's Report

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact me by phone 970.596.3755 or email [suestern1@gmail.com](mailto:suestern1@gmail.com). Thank you all for your continued support of our church and missions.

### Month End Report — As of November 30, 2023

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income ABOVE Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$ 80,862	\$ 78,167	\$ 1,695	\$190,000
Expenses	\$ 95,403			
Net <b>LOSS</b>	<\$ 14,541>			

**Remember:** If you plan to make a stock or cash donation from a brokerage account, PLEASE notify me or have your broker send a contribution letter to UCSJ. These transactions rarely include the name of the account holder making it difficult to determine who sent the donation. Thank you!

*Sue Stern, Treasurer*

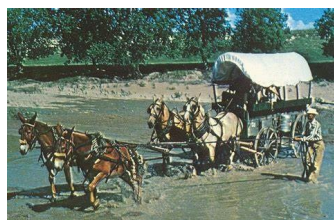


### Post-Christmas Clean up (Undecorating) Saturday, January 6, from 9 AM to 12 PM

Please assist us with undecorating the church.  
Thanks for planning on helping.

*Tim Spangler, Worship & Music Ministry*

## Men's Breakfast — Saturday, January 20 at 8:30 AM



The January 20th presentation will be given by **Kevin Chismire** on Dave Wood "King of the freight lines" in western Colorado. He freighted over roads that were scarcely more than trails and where there was no road at all he built one. His huge freight wagons hauled out ore and hauled in food, machinery, dynamite, coal and everything needed at the mines. Dave Wood spent his later years at his ranch south of Dallas a few miles north of Ridgway. This is a story of his life 1878 to 1944. This is an excellent presentation given to the Ouray Historical Society a year ago.

## Ouray County Food Pantry

Let's start the year with a clean house for our January food pantry contributions. The Ouray County Food Pantry **welcomes donations of laundry and dish detergent, and cleaning products**. These are things that aren't often available through Food Bank of the Rockies, and can't be purchased with SNAP benefits, so they are always needed. Bring your donations of these or any other unexpired, unopened items to the church on Sunday or during office hours. Thank you.



*Cindi Myers, Mission & Outreach Ministry Member*

## Sunday Worship

Sunday worship service is also videotaped and posted, following the service, on [Facebook](#) and our [website](#), for those wishing to worship at home.



## Communion

Join us at our Lord's Table  
(1st Sunday)  
**Sunday, January 7**



**Thank you** for your generous support. To contribute online just click the link below or you can send your offerings to the church office at P.O. Box 295, Ridgway, CO 81432.

[Click here to donate](#)



## Connections at UCSJ

### Mindfulness with Katy Kristoffersen — Begins Sunday, January 7, at 4:30 PM

See page two for details.

### Community Learning — Beginning January 10, at 4:30 PM with book discussions and 6 PM soup supper

It's not too late to join us. Contact Mick Graff if you'd like to participate in person or via Zoom.

*Natural Grace* by Matthew Fox and Rupert Sheldrake

*The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels* by Thomas Cahill

### Men's Breakfast — Saturday, January 20, at 8:30 AM

See page three for details.

### On the Same Page Book Club — Friday, January 26, at 10 AM

*The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams

If you love words and how they can shape our lives, this historical fiction work is the book you've been waiting to read and didn't know it. Set in Oxford, England, at the dawn of the 20th century, lexicographers are meeting daily in a garden shed known as the Scriptorium to collect and discard words for the first "Oxford English Dictionary." Esme begins collecting the lost words to create her own dictionary as she discovers the power of words to resurrect, destroy, and enlighten all of us.

Mary Ann Guilinger will be facilitating, and books are available in the gathering area (\$10).

### Gals' Lunch — Monday, January 29, at Noon, at Kismet

Want to try Ridgway's newest restaurant—Kismet Cafe? It's located at 618 Clinton (across from Kate's) and features Mediterranean casual food. Please sign up in the gathering area.

### Dinner Together

If you'd like to host a meal in your home or at a restaurant, please contact Carolyn Snowbarger. You can pick the date, time, and how many guests you'd like to have. We'll help with announcements, communications, and sign-up sheets.

### Cookies, Cookies, Cookies

**Thank you!** Our kitchen overflowed with your gifts of cookies. **Thanks also to Joan Moyer** for her famous Christmas punch for both Christmas programs.



### Coming Soon!

Super Bowl Party, February 11

Easter Brunch, March 31

### Congregational Life Ministry Team

If you have questions, please check with anyone from our committee: *Jenny Cheek, Sue Conrad, Charlotte Duckett, Anne Linenberger, Marge Quist, Lish Sheppard, Elise Shirey, Kay Sibold, Carolyn Snowbarger, and Gen Spangler.*



## WEEKLY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

**Mindfulness with Katy Kristoffersen** — Sundays at 4:30 PM (Begins January 7)

**Centering Prayer** ([via Zoom](#)) — Mondays at 9 AM

**Community Learning** — Wednesdays at 4:30 PM with book discussions and 6 PM soup supper (Begins January 10)

**Women's Bible Studies** ([via Zoom](#)) — Thursdays at 9:30 AM

**Men's Bible Studies** ([via Zoom](#)) — Saturdays at 8:30 AM



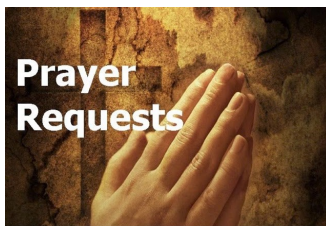
## Caring for One Another . . .

*If you have a prayer request or concern that you would like your UCSJ faith community to hear or a confidential prayer request for our prayer team (but not for public communication)? Please call the church office at 970.626.5803 or email*

*[ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com). You can also contact Pastor Melinda or a member of the Care Team. The Care Team list is posted in the gathering area.*

Concerns shown here are printed only with the permission of the person involved.

## Prayer Requests



## Tasty Morsels from “PLUM” Corner



*Merry Christmas!!!*

*I hope you have had wonderful celebrations of Christ's birth with those you love and who love you. Below are articles of upcoming events in 2024 and updates from our four denominations.*

*Happy New Year to all...*

*Kim Lundgren*

**PRESBYTERIANS** — The Unification Commission will get to the work of determining how and when the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Office of General Assembly will become one. Working with staff, a three-member appointed task force will help commissioners with standing rules and procedures in the lead-up to the GA226 in Salt Lake City, Utah. During a Zoom meeting on Saturday, December 16, the Unification Commission voted to approve the formation of a small task force to work with staff to review its charter “and all polity, process and procedural issues” related to the commission’s upcoming report to the 226th General Assembly on January 18-20, 2024 in Louisville, Kentucky and make recommendations to the Unification Commission at its next meeting. Here are two full articles on this topic—read the first article [here](#) and the second article [here](#).

**LUTHERANS** — Now through January 15, 2024: Rocky Mountain Synod congregations, councils, and members have the opportunity (through January 15) to suggest potential nominees. Full information and nominations can be made [using this link](#).

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles, California featured *A Time for Burning*, a film of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The film was shown on December 17 as part of the museum series “Works of Enduring Importance: 35 Years of the National Film Registry.” [Read the full article here](#).

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST** — Three UCC organizations receive \$3 million total in Thriving Congregations grants. Three different United Church of Christ organizations were among the recipients. [Read the full article here](#).

**METHODISTS** — The General Conference is set to take place April 23-May 3, 2024 in the Charlotte, North Carolina convention center—bringing together United Methodists from four continents who will make decisions that will shape the global denomination for years to come. [Click here for the full article](#) and more information regarding the Conference agenda and tasks.

## January Birthdays

3 – Don Radovich  
3 – Ina Dow  
5 – Wendy Kidd  
7 – Leslie Wood  
10 – Mike Kristoffersen  
12 – Harvey Scoville  
15 – Kathy Graff  
16 – George Weekly  
18 – Peg Kristoffersen  
19 – Gary Elliott  
20 – Josephine Scoville  
22 – Ken Sloan  
23 – Gay Kempner  
24 – Mary Mardock  
24 – Kia Chandler  
27 – Jim Wing  
30 – Tracy Orvis

## January Anniversaries

22 – Charlie Carson & Marsha McCall

Please let the church office ([ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com) or 970.626.5803) know if we’re missing your birthday and/or anniversary. Thank you.

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## Administrative Committee Meeting

(Second Tuesday)

**Tuesday, January 9**

**3 PM**

Administrative Committee meets monthly. **FULL COUNCIL** (Pastor, Administrative Committee, and Ministry Committee Representatives) meets quarterly.

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## Men’s Breakfast

(3rd Saturday)

**Saturday, January 20**

**8:30 AM**

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Now that winter is here, please remember that the parking spaces on the west side of the building are primarily for those who have difficulty walking. Thank you!

## Celebrate the Season by Watching These Christmas Programs



*Sounds  
of the  
Season*

The December 2, [Community Youth Choir Christmas Concert](#) and the December 3 performance of the [UCSJ and Friends Lessons and Carols](#).

They will be available until the end of December 2023 on the [UCSJ website](#).



*Please remember that pictures of members and their children may be posted around the church and on the internet (website and Facebook). If you do not want your picture used, please contact the church office. Thank you!*



[www.ucsjridgway.org](http://www.ucsjridgway.org)

For up-to-date information, including council highlights, newsletters (in color), calendar, etc.

**Connect with UCSJ!**



And like us!

[www.facebook.com/ucsjridgway](https://www.facebook.com/ucsjridgway)

*We are affiliated with:*

- ~ Presbyterian Church (USA)*
- ~ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*
- ~ United Church of Christ*
- ~ United Methodist Church*



PO Box 295 — Ridgway, CO 81432