

Worship Sundays at 10 AM

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 295
Ridgway, CO 81432

Email: ucsjoffice@gmail.com

Website: www.ucsjridgway.org

Facebook:

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

Vacant — Administrative Assistant

Katy Kristoffersen — Director of Music

Sue Stern — Treasurer

Laura Hagert — Custodian

Mike Kristoffersen — Audio-visual Operator

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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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Website and Newsletter Editor — Barb Eliason

Newslink Editor — Administrative Assistant

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



Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ

— Galatians 6:2 (New Living Bible)

April 5th will mark 4 months since my mother died. In some ways it seems like she just “took flight.” Those were the words my brother wrote in the text he sent to say she was gone—the one I received at the gate as I was waiting to take a flight to see her.

I have been pondering that idea of taking flight, especially as we walk from Lent into this Easter tide. There is so much in life that can clip our wings, drag us down, and keep us grounded. My wings have seemed clipped to me these past 4 months. Some days my heart has been so heavy it felt as if it would fall out of my chest.

Grief is a strange experience, as many of you know. It comes. It goes. It hovers. It settles in. It goes again. It rearranges things: your sense of self, the fabric of your world, your memory, your sense of time, your sleep, everything, basically. And while grief does that for you, the world continues on at the pace it has ever gone. Bills must still be paid, laundry done, groceries shopped for, meals cooked, errands run, the house cleaned, sermons preached, and so on.

It can be a very tough walk, this walking with grief. It's best not done alone. That is why I am so grateful for each of you. On hard days, I go through the stack of cards you sent. I go back through your texts. Your kind condolences, your hugs, your patience, understanding, and grace have lifted that heaviness when I could not get out from under it myself. I feel a few new feathers starting to grow in those clipped places.

At first, it was just too tender to say much about—it can still be. Things were hard to put into words—they sometimes still are. I figure it will be that way for a good while. At the same time, I have felt covered in your prayers, care, grace, and love. All those things have given me the strength to keep walking and working through the heaviness of this time. You have been, in your own special and unique ways, helping me carry this burden and walking with me toward a new sense of home.

When I was serving the church in Glenwood, we were talking about why being present in the community that is church is important. One woman, talking about people for whom the outdoors is their church, said, “I get that. I love the outdoors, too, but a tree can't come to your door with a hug and encouraging words. I need you all to do that!” And so do I—and so do we all. Thank God we are church for one another! And thank you for showing how wonderful church can be.

Blessings, Melinda

Calendar for April

(For more information, see page #s)

Sunday, April 7 — 10 AM

Communion

Tuesday, April 9 — 4:30 PM

Administrative Committee Meeting

Saturday, April 20 — 8:30 AM

Men's Breakfast (pg. 4)

Tuesday, April 23 — Noon

Gals' Lunch at Blue Corn, Montrose (pg. 4)

Monday, April 29 — 10 AM

On the Same Page Book Club (pg. 4)

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Weekly Activities



SUNDAYS

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

MONDAYS — 9 AM (via Zoom)

Centering Prayer

WEDNESDAYS

10 AM — Prayer Shawl Ministry

4:30 PM — Community Learning

Book Studies Followed by Soup Supper
(Begins April 3) (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
or leave a detailed message on the
church phone 970.626.5803.

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

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Thank you for your generous
support. To contribute online,
[click here](#) or mail your offerings to
the church office at PO Box 295,
Ridgway, CO 81432.

*Thank
You!*

March Full Council Highlights

Your UCSJ Council met on March 12 and began with a devotional entitled "Touching on Teamwork." Pastor Melinda reminded us that we are all parts of one body and have many varied gifts and that the Council is to use this model for collaborating with each other and you. Besides the usual approval of minutes and financials, the Council approved **Linda Ingo** as Financial Assistant—the one who organizes the plate counters; approved a Safety & Security Policy; approved Job Descriptions for the Technical Support Consultant (audio-visual operator) and the Administrative Assistant; and appointed a Safety Team. The meeting was closed in prayer. **Tuesday, April 9, at 4:30 PM will be an Administrative Committee meeting**, which will include discussion on insurance, planning the June Annual meeting, and beginning the budgeting process. Please attend if you have any ideas or concerns.

The **Nominating Committee** met on March 18. This team will discern and recruit church members to fill several council positions. Positions that are open and will be voted on at the June annual meeting include **Vice-chair Ministry, Vice-chair Operations, Care Ministry, Education Ministry, Membership Ministry and Nominating Committee** (which consists of two council members and three congregational members). The two current council members of Vice-chair positions are willing to provide leadership for another two years and run for a second term; these are Donna Whiskeman (Ministry) and Joan Moyer (Operations). Please pray about filling one of the open positions and let the Nominating Committee know of your interest, they can also answer your questions about time commitment and responsibilities. **Tom Chase is the chair of this committee, and members include Cindi Myers, Alice Goertz, Joan Moyer, and Donna Whiskeman.**

Advertising for the Administrative Assistant continues through March. Pastor Melinda, Admin Assistant Anita, and Council Chair will interview applicants and present their recommendation to council for approval.

Anita Posey has done an amazing job as Administrative Assistant and her attention to detail and art design will be missed, however, she will still be worshiping with us. Thanks, Anita for your service and dedication.

Exciting News About the UCSJ Endowment Fund



The placement of the UCSJ Endowment Fund money under the management of the Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF) in June 2022 has proven to be a good move. Our money at TPF has been invested in a broadly diversified portfolio that includes a money market, stocks, and fixed income securities. As a result, the value of our Endowment Fund has grown from \$12,345 in 2022 to \$14,542 as of February 29, 2024 for an increase of almost 18%.

Increasing the value of the UCSJ Endowment Fund through good investments is exciting. However, **WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP** in order to make the value of the Fund become large enough to provide for periodic distributions of the investment income for special needs of the church. Any contribution would be beneficial and can be as simple as a Direct Gift of cash or as sophisticated as a Deferred Gift through your will.

For more information you can get a copy of the Endowment Fund Brochure located in the church library. **You can also talk to any of the Endowment Fund Committee members (currently Clayton Beaudry, Jenny Cheek, Steve Wolff, and Dennis Eliason).**

UCSJ Endowment Fund Committee

Treasurer's Report

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


Month End Report — As of February 29, 2024

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income BELOW Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$124,443	\$126,667	<\$2,224>	\$190,000
Expenses	\$135,274			
Net LOSS	<\$10,831>			

Sue Stern, Treasurer

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!

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, April 7



Tasty Morsels from "PLUM" Corner

PRESBYTERIANS — This month Presbyterian USA is asking for a special donation to **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**. Please consider this request for support and you can write your check and put it in the collection on Sunday or go to pcusa.org.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING is celebrating 75 years of service and this is a great way to help our troubled world. If you have a chance [check out the web page](#) and see where and what all they support. Keep in mind we are all better together when we reach out to help someone else.

LUTHERANS — We had the privilege of having Bishop Gonia visit with us last month. This year is his final year to serve the Rocky Mountain Synod as Bishop. Arline and I have had the pleasure of knowing Bishop Gonia for those 12 years. It was a great time for us to get to know him and I welcomed his support when I was Director of the Mission Builder program for the ELCA. A new bishop will be elected at the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly on April 25 and 26. Arline and I will be attending the assembly and representing UCSJ. Thanks to the church council for giving us this opportunity.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST — The UCC Digest has several articles this month on events they are supporting.

The [Open and Affirming Coalition](#) of the United Church of Christ recently got a refreshed look. The coalition's brand-new logo and updated website accompany a commitment to continually work toward expanding the amount of ONA churches within the UCC, while also developing more education and support around what it means to be ONA in an ongoing way and engage with the intersectionality of people's identities.

The Rev. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh [has served as the coalition's executive director for just over a year](#), and in an [interview here](#), she shares reflections on developments during that time and some of the future dreams still in the works. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

METHODISTS — I want to take a moment to introduce you to a program in the United Methodist Church called **NOMADS**. **"GET YOUR SPIRIT IN SHAPE"** is the call from this group to come and see if you would like to be part of this group. Retirement + power tools + RV = NOMADS. If you find this to be of interest, please [click here](#).

Arline and I spent 20 years with a group similar to NOMADS called ELCA Mission Builders, out side of raising our children this was the best 20 years of our life. If you want to know, more ask and we will be willing to fill you in on the group.

Tom Chase

Connections at UCSJ

Gals' Lunches

Wednesday, March 27, at Noon, at Greenwood's in Ridgway

Tuesday, April 23, at Noon, at Blue Corn in Montrose

Please sign up in the gathering area or let Carolyn Snowbarger know if you plan to attend.



Annual Easter Potluck Brunch — Sunday, March 31, from 8-9:30 AM

Join us for our annual Easter brunch between the sunrise service and morning worship. If you'd like to help with food, please bring an egg dish, potato casserole, fruit, or bread.

Community Learning — Begins on Wednesday, April 3, at 4:30 PM with Soup Supper at 6 PM

Join us for book discussions and soup suppers. Contact Mick Graff for additional information.

- *Grounded: Finding God in the World—A Spiritual Revolution* by Diana Butler Bass
- *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg

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

See below (page 4) for details.

Happy 99th Birthday, Jean Bosworth!

Join us for fellowship time on **Sunday, April 21**, as we celebrate this milestone with Jean.



On the Same Page Book Club — Monday, April 29, at 10 AM

Cheap Land Colorado: Off-Gridders at America's Edge by Ted Conover

Award-winning author Ted Conover writes of rural life in the San Luis Valley where five-acre lots can be purchased for under \$10,000. This non-fiction book explores the diverse residents longing for independence and self-sufficiency. Vince and Carolyn Snowbarger will be facilitating. Books are available in the gathering area (\$10).



Sunday Treats

Thanks to **Gen Spangler** and **Alice Goertz** for bringing treats in March. We'd love your help, too, so please sign up in the gathering area.

Save the Dates for UCSJ's Scenic Adventures! Details to follow.

Moab—June 3-5

During the days you can choose your own adventures: hiking, exploring Utah's canyons, or visiting Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.

Creede — July 30-August 1

If you love the mountains, history, outdoor adventures, and great theatre productions join us in Creede.

Fall Colors — September 27

Explore Colorado's aspen gold rush in Gunnison and Crested Butte.

Congregational Life Ministry Team:

Jenny Cheek, Sue Conrad, Charlotte Duckett, Anne Linenberger, Lish Sheppard, Elise Shirey, Kay Sibold, Carolyn Snowbarger, and Gen Spangler.



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

Don Paulson will be giving a presentation on the "Abandoned Mining Sites: Stories From the Past."

Hi everyone — I am appealing for volunteers to get called by Church Mutual if there is a fire at church. This is not your fathers smoke alarm system that goes off monthly. Rather, I strongly suspect this will never happen, and I also want to point out that the alarm first goes to me and gives me 90 seconds to silence it or do something. If I get an alarm, I am likely to silence it and then call the fire department so you will only get called if I don't respond. So this is highly unlikely to happen—only one individual has volunteered but I think we need a few more church members to agree with my request.

With assistance from Michael Moore and Fred Quist, we have installed a new fire alarm system supported by Church Mutual, our insurance company. The system has two components: first there is a conventional smoke alarm, with ten year batteries. Right next to the smoke alarm is a microphone system that listens for the smoke alarm to go off—and notifies Church Mutual through a base station located on the table in the lobby. There are two sensors in the sanctuary, one in the lobby, and one in the office.

Right now, my personal iPhone is the mother ship. When an alarm sounds, my phone and iPad both light up with visual and audio alarms. If I don't cancel the alarm in 90 seconds, then Church Mutual will intervene and begin calling a list of phone numbers. We need to have five people who are willing to have their phone numbers listed with Church Mutual to respond, and it would be best if the phone numbers are church members in the Ridgway area because I am on Log Hill Mesa. The chances of this all happening are very, very low—we have not had a fire in our church ever, and remember the first alert goes to me no matter where I am (even France like last month). I am thinking of adding a camera in the Sanctuary to our Ring Camera system so that I can look at the camera if an alarm goes off, to see if anything is going on.

So let me know if you are willing to have your phone number listed. I am going to meet with the fire department and talk about what they would like our response to be. Some departments will only respond to a verified alarm and so we may be required to have someone go to the church to check—or call the Marshal or Sheriff to check. This is TBD.

Timothy Spangler



April Birthdays

2 – Dale Laidlaw
3 – Jim Hill
3 – Jan Osterhof
3 – Cavan Pasek
4 – Dee Moore
4 – Harriet Turner
6 – Dave Conrad
6 – Marge Quist
16 – Edward Beall
16 – Terry Thomas
18 – Bob O'Rourke
19 – Sandy Sloan
20 – Jean Bosworth
20 – Eric Lattanner
20 – Sprague Mayger
21 – Laura Hagert
23 – Charlotte Duckett

April Anniversaries

12 – Bob & Pam Larson
21 – Gary & Martha Elliott
28 – Don Scholl & Lysa Riggs

Please let the church office
(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, April 9

4:30 PM

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

Ouray County Food Pantry

Each month UCSJ collects items to donate to the Ouray County Food Pantry. The pantry receives many items through its partnership with Food Bank of the Rockies, so we try to fill in with items that are tougher to obtain, focusing on different categories of items throughout the year. **This month, it's givers' choice. Bring whatever items you think people might need to feed themselves and their families and care for themselves and their homes—food, personal care, or cleaning items.** Items must be unopened and can't be expired. Grab a couple of extras when you're doing your regular shopping and help out your neighbors. Thank you.

Cindi Myers, Mission & Outreach Ministry Member

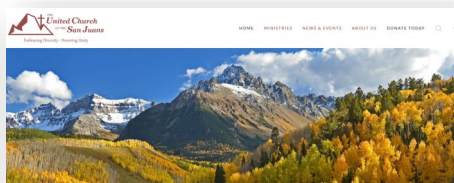


Community Learning
EDUCATION
Centering Prayer
Women's Bible Study
Men's Bible Study

WEEKLY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Centering Prayer ([via Zoom](#)) — Mondays at 9 AM
Community Learning — Wednesdays at 4:30 PM with book discussions
and 6 PM soup supper (Begins April 3, 2024) (pg. 4)
Women's Bible Studies ([via Zoom](#)) — Thursdays at 9:30 AM
Men's Bible Studies ([via Zoom](#)) — Saturdays at 8:30 AM

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

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

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And like us!

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