

Worship Sundays at 10 AM

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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

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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)

External Publicity — Kate Kellogg

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UCSJ Office Hours

Tuesday and Wednesday

9 AM — 2:30 PM

Thursday

9 AM — 1 PM



Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.
— Hebrews 12:1-2a

I don't think any of us would be here without that "great cloud of witnesses." We so need each other to "run with perseverance the race marked out for us." I would not have received the gift of being part of a family of faith without all the others who were part of my home church.

In my mind, my own family had to show up for me, but none of the rest of the people at church did. Yet, throughout my life, many of them were there every week. Some I grew up with in Sunday school and youth group. Others I saw singing in the choir, reading scripture and leading in worship. Some set up coffee and treats for fellowship time. Some organized mission projects and got us all involved in them. Some led Bible studies or arranged for special church events. They all taught me, with mostly their actions, the gift of being part of Christ's Body.

But I learned about far more than just doing from them. I learned who Christ calls us all to be from how they participated and interacted with each other. It wasn't that they never disagreed, but it was how they handled each other in the midst of those disagreements that taught me the power of love. They didn't cancel or cut each other off. Over time they worked through whatever came up. They weren't all best friends—yet even those with clashing personalities showed up at funerals, setting up the sanctuary or the reception or the lunch. They sat together at Bible studies and worked together on mission projects. As they kept showing up over the years, I watched some of their rough edges gradually smooth and disagreements shift to an acceptance of different perspectives and a sense that we are all in this life together.

Because Allhallowstide opens the month of November—that's the days of Halloween, All Saints Day and All Souls Day—it becomes an opportunity to remember and give thanks for those we've known in that great cloud of witnesses who have shown us how to live Christ's way.

As you make your way from Allhallowstide to Thanksgiving, I invite you to take a moment each day to remember and give thanks for those whose faith has shaped your life. In doing so, you will see God's incredible grace made plain in the great treasure of faith we have in each other.

Blessings, Melinda

Calendar for November

(For more information, see page #5)

Wednesday, November 1 — 9:30 AM

Operation Christmas Child "Packing Party" (pg. 2)

Sunday, November 5

Daylight Savings Ends

10 AM — Communion

Sunday, November 12 — 5 PM

Dinner Together (pg. 5)

Tuesday, November 14 — 4:30 PM

Full Council Meeting

Friday, November 17 — Noon

Gals' Lunch at Stonehouse, Montrose (pg. 5)

Thursday, November 23



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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 (pg. 3)

4:30 PM and 7 PM Book Studies; Soup at 6 PM

Community Learning, through November 1

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

Prayer Requests/Announcements

for the Sunday bulletin

(deadline is Wednesday at noon).

Please email ucsjoffice@gmail.com or leave a detailed message on the church phone 970.626.5803

October Council Highlights

The Administrative sub-committee met in early October. The meeting was opened with a devotional about listening before speaking.

Financials indicate that you, our congregation, have been keeping this congregation financially sound with your generous Sunday giving. Thanks. The most pressing news is that so far this fiscal year nearly \$13k has been expended for building and grounds upkeep and repairs, including air conditioning, fans, faulty wiring, exterior drain, tree trimming, garden renovation. So items that are less critical are being held till next fiscal year. This includes the purchase and installation of a Greenspire Linden tree (\$1,226) to replace the Aspens in front of the church. Let council know if you are interested in funding this tree to be installed this fall.

The AV Project is moving ahead with the purchase of equipment and construction of the acoustical panels. Completion is estimated to be December 1, 2023. Old Audio equipment will be offered to the congregation at no charge. This includes the speakers, assisted hearing devices, wireless mic, and amplifier (which has lost one channel but otherwise works). Contact Fred Quist at 970.626.4335 if you are interested. If no one in the congregation wants the equipment it will be donated to another church that has indicated interest.

The Facility Use policy was updated to stress the need for a designated person to open and close the church when events are approved.

Anita Posey will be on vacation from October 26 to November 6. If you have information for the Sunday bulletins (October 29 and November 5), please get the information to her as soon as possible.

The meeting was closed with prayer. **The next full Council meeting will be Tuesday, November 14 at 4:30 PM.** Please let us know your questions and concerns and come join us.

Operation Christmas Child

It's that time again! Christmas will be here before we know it and once again UCSJ has the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child.

Operation Christmas Child is dedicated to helping children worldwide understand that Jesus loves and cares for them. When Franklin Graham agreed to fill shoeboxes with toys and other fun items for children in war-torn Bosnia in 1993, he had no idea what the project would grow to become. Over the past 30 years, Samaritan's Purse has collected and delivered more than 200 million Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts, thanks to a church and [volunteer network](#) in the U.S. and around the world that is hundreds of thousands strong. For many of these children, it is the only gift they have ever received.

This year we are going to have a **PACKING PARTY** at the home of Lisa Young on **Wednesday, November 1 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM.** Lisa's address is 945 Riversage Drive in Riversage off Hwy. 550. Bring all the gifts you have collected, and we will put the boxes together as a group. It will be an opportunity for fellowship and hands on mission work.

See you there!!



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 September 30, 2023

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income Above Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$ 52,155	\$ 47,500	\$ 4,680	\$190,000
Expenses	\$ 54,516			
Net LOSS	<\$ 2,361>			

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

Charitable IRA Distributions

Do you have a traditional IRA? Are you 70 ½ years old or older? Then you may be eligible to make qualified charitable distributions from your IRA **without having to pay federal income taxes on the distributions**. These distributions are not tax deductible and must be made payable directly to a qualified charity.

Please speak with your Broker and Tax Advisor to determine if this makes sense for you.

(UCSJ is receiving a number of these checks directly from brokerage houses for individuals. We usually treat these contributions as an "annual" gift and prorate the reporting of the contribution over the remaining months of the fiscal year.)

Dennis Eliason, Finance Vice-Chair

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, November 5



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 Today](#)

City Market Community Rewards

Thank you to the 15 households who helped UCSJ receive \$179.56 last quarter!

It's easy to help UCSJ receive donations using your City Market/Kroger card. You just need a digital account, so if you already have one just click [here](#) and scroll down to the "Link your shopper's card" to get started and search for United Church of the San Juans, select, and save. If you don't have a digital account, you will need to create one. Any transactions moving forward will be applied to the program at no added cost to you.



The Prayer Shawl Ministry is Up and Running!

Knitting or crocheting is a special time for women. Our Prayer Shawl ministry has already produced precious moments as you can see in the photo. We are relearning how to knit, sharing stories all while knowing our shawls will go to someone at UCSJ who is facing a difficult time and needs to know they are in our prayers.

If you would like to join us, **we meet every Wednesday at the home of Mary Mardock at 10 AM**. Give Donna Whiskeman a call (970.729.0273) if you are interested.



Tasty Morsels from “PLUM” Corner

This month I am taking the liberty of providing comments from our denominations about their reaction to the violence in the Middle East. Due to the length of the message, I did not include the statement from the Lutheran Bishop Eaton. It is well written and can be found on [Facebook](#). All of our denominations have disaster relief programs. They are all looking for financial assistance during the crises in Gaza and Ukraine.

Tom Chase

PRESBYTERIANS — As violence escalates in and around Israel/Palestine, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is providing humanitarian assistance through partners on the ground and through ACT Alliance.

PDA has approved a solidarity grant for a hospital in Gaza and will continue supporting our partners providing humanitarian assistance. Our response efforts will encompass a wide array of vital humanitarian interventions including delivering crucial psychosocial support to individuals wrestling with the emotional aftermath of the warfare. To support our response, [designate gifts here](#).

It is time for our Triennial visit, for our brothers and sisters, from the Western CO Presbytery. Pastor Melinda and our church council will be meeting with them on November 14.

LUTHERANS — I want to pass on some information about the ELCA you may not know. **The Book of Concord** is the historical doctrinal standard of the Lutheran belief. Within **The Book of Concord**, there are ten creedal documents seen as authoritative for Lutherans, which include the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, the Large Catechism of Martin Luther, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles of Martin Luther, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, and the Formula of Concord (Ibid.). Our Lutheran Denomination places great emphasis on the Book of Concord.

The Rocky Mountain synod of The ELCA will be electing a new Bishop at the spring synod assembly. Bishop Gonia has been a strong supporter of UCSJ and we will miss his support.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST — We unequivocally condemn Hamas' attacks and violent treatment of civilians and call for the immediate release of all hostages in captivity. We also condemn the indiscriminate and violent Israeli response that has already claimed hundreds of civilian lives. The Israeli government's decision to shut off power, water, and fuel will have a disastrous impact on millions of civilians in Gaza, including over a million children, especially those who need immediate medical attention.

METHODISTS — The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem called for peace and justice amid unfolding violence. “The Holy Land, a place sacred to countless millions around the world, is currently mired in violence and suffering due to the prolonged political conflict and the lamentable absence of justice and respect for human rights,” their statement reads. “We, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, have time and again appealed for the importance of respecting the historic and legal Status Quo of the holy shrines.”

The statement unequivocally condemns any acts that target civilians, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, or faith. “It is our fervent hope and prayer that all parties involved will heed this call for an immediate cessation of violence,” the statement reads. “We implore political leaders and authorities to engage in sincere dialogue, seeking lasting solutions that promote justice, peace, and reconciliation for the people of this land, who have endured the burdens of conflict for far too long.”



*Sounds
of the
Season*

Christmas Programs

TWO Christmas programs will kick off UCSJ's Advent Season:

- Community Youth Choir Christmas Concert—Saturday, December 2, at 3 PM
- UCSJ and Friends Lessons and Carols—Sunday, December 3, at 3 PM

Rehearsals begin this week. The adult choir will be practicing on Thursdays from 5-6 PM. Youth choir will be meeting on Sundays at 4 PM.

If you or someone you know would like to participate, contact Katy Kristoffersen (ucsjmusic@gmail.com). All are welcome!

Connections at UCSJ

Operation Christmas Child — Wednesday, November 1, at 9:30 AM

See page 2 for details.

Dinner Together — Sunday, November 12, at 5 PM

Lisa and David Young will host a dinner at their home on Sunday evening, November 12. Their address is 945 Riversage just north of Ridgway. They'll have a social time beginning at 5 PM with dinner at 6 PM. Please sign up in the gathering area.

If you'd like to host a meal, 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. **Thanks to Jere and Clayton Beaudry for hosting a dinner last month.**

Community Learning

Do you have a book you think others might enjoy, too? Please send your suggestions to Mick Graff or Carolyn Snowbarger by November 12. Our winter session begins on January 10.

Gals' Lunch — Friday, November 17, at Noon, at Stonehouse in Montrose

We'll laugh, share experiences, and catch up! Please sign up in the gathering area.

On the Same Page Book Club

***Winter Garden* by Kristen Hannah — Friday, December 15, at 10 AM**

This is a parallel novel spans time and space—Leningrad in World War II and the Pacific Northwest in the 1990s. It's a tale of relationships—husbands, wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters—and the events that shape their lives.

We'll meet at UCSJ on Friday, December 15, at 10 AM, to share our impressions and takeaways. Books are available in the gathering area (\$10).

Men's Breakfast

The men's breakfast group will be taking a break during the holidays. Their next breakfast will be on Saturday, January 20.

Thank you!

Thanks to our fellowship treat-bringers this past month: **Marge Quist, Glenda Moore, Donna Whiskeman, Sue Conrad, and Carolyn Snowbarger.** David Stytz always has the coffee going, too.

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.*

November Birthdays

6 – David Young
7 – Diana Schreiber
9 – Margaret Fredericks
9 – Alicia Sheppard
18 – Reed Kramer
18 – Pam Stofferahn
18 – Brian Wood
21 – Bob Larson
26 – Michael Moore
28 – Dennis Eliason
29 – Larry Harley
29 – Ian Snapp

November Anniversaries

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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Full Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 14

4:30 PM

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

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

Ouray County Food Pantry

The November focus for our donations to the Ouray County Food Pantry is **personal hygiene items—soap, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, lotion, as well as toilet paper, and feminine hygiene items.** All other donations of unexpired, unopened items are always welcome. Thank you for your continued support of the food pantry.

Cindi Myers, Mission & Outreach Ministry Member



