

Worship Sundays at 10 AM

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UCSJ Staff

Rev. Melinda Veatch — Pastor

Rev. Dick Engdahl — Pastor Emeritus

Deacon Bob Larson — Missional Outreach

Deacon Kathy Graff — Spiritual Formation

Shirley Didier — Administrative Assistant

Katy Kristoffersen — Director of Music

Sue Stern — Treasurer

Laura Hagert — Custodian

Mike Kristoffersen — Audio-visual Operator

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UCSJ Council

(Ministry in Parentheses)

Rev. Melinda Veatch

Charlotte Duckett (Membership)

Alice Goertz (Care)

Pam Larson (Chair)

Joan Moyer (Operations)

Elise Shirey (Education)

Carolyn Snowbarger (Congregational Life)

Vince Snowbarger (Finance)

Timothy Spangler (Worship & Music)

Donna Whiskeman (Ministry)

Lisa Young (Mission & Outreach)

[\(Learn more about their roles here\)](#)

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Website & 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, Wednesday, and Thursday

9 AM to 1 PM



(Drawing courtesy of Dick Engdahl)



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 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 #s)

Sunday, November 2

2 AM — Daylight Saving Ends

10 AM — Communion

Monday, November 10 — 10 AM

On the Same Page (pg. 7)

Tuesday, November 11

VETERANS DAY



Wednesday, November 12 — 2 PM

Full Council Meeting

Thursday, November 13 — Noon

Gals' Lunch at Taco Del Gnar, Ridgway (pg. 4)

Sunday, November 16 — After Worship

Celebrating November Birthdays (pg. 4)

Sunday, November 23 — After Worship

Pie Sunday (pg. 4)

Hanging of the Greens (pg. 2)

Thursday, November 27



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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

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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Thank you for your generous support. To contribute online, [click here](#) or mail your offerings to the church office:

PO Box 295, Ridgway, CO 81432.

SCAM-alot and Council Highlights!

As Pastor Melinda described in her newsletter article for October, the UCSJ family has been the victim of email and texting scams trying to use Pastor Melinda to raise money. With Artificial Intelligence (AI), people can now pretend to be someone in phone calls and videos. Scams are everywhere and UCSJ is not exempt.



The Administrative Committee of the Council is taking several steps to minimize those scams going forward. Please be patient as we go through those processes.

- We have asked that electronic distribution of the church directory be suspended for the time being.
- We are going to work with our insurer to see what protections they would suggest.
- We will review the security of our computer and internet systems at the church to discover any weaknesses we might have so we can reduce those.

Even with these precautions, there is only one person who can assure your safety from scams—YOU. Over the next few months, UCSJ will try to provide education opportunities, warnings and assistance in dealing with these attacks. Your banking institutions and organizations like AARP continue to provide scam warnings. Pay attention to them. We've had reports of major retailers giving warnings when people tried to purchase multiple gift cards (one of the scams that hit UCSJ).

It's tempting to just say "Don't trust anybody," but that seems a terrible way to live. Maybe the best admonition is, "Trust, but verify." Pastor Melinda has already indicated that she won't solicit your help by emails or texts. If you receive a request that seems out-of-the-ordinary, ask before you do anything. If you get an email you don't recognize, don't click on attachments or links in the email. If your bank asks for information, call them or better yet, go in and talk to someone in person.

If it sounds unusual or too good to be true, be skeptical. Protect yourself and be safe.

The next Full Council meeting will be on Wednesday, November 12, at 2 PM.

Vince Snowbarger, Finance Vice Chair



Hanging of the Greens

Plan to join us in the greening of the church on **Sunday, November 23, following worship service**, as we prepare for the Advent season.



Daylight Saving Ends Sunday, November 2, at 2 AM

Remember to set your clocks
BACK ONE hour.



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, 2025

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income ABOVE Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$55,360	\$52,750	\$2,610	\$211,000
Expenses	\$55,965			
Net LOSS	<\$ 605>			

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.



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Join us at our Lord's Table
(1st Sunday)

November 2



PLUM Corner

Presbyterian — The devastation and evacuation of multiple communities in Alaska is being deeply felt by the Presbytery of the Yukon following a deadly storm on the state's western coast that swept some homes away. To assist Presbyterian Disaster Assistance with its response in Alaska, [click here](#).

Lutheran ELCA — ELCA Today is World Food Day! Every year, on October 16, people around the world raise awareness of and act toward food security for all. For over 50 years, we have joined together as Lutherans through [ELCA World Hunger](#) to address the root causes of hunger and poverty and to foster sustainable solutions in more than 60 countries around the world.

United Church of Christ — What made Kimmel's dismissal particularly alarming to the [United Church of Christ's Media Justice Ministry](#) were threats that the current chairman of the [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#) made right before Kimmel's firing and comments he made about freedom of speech and [broadcasting "in the public interest."](#)

Methodist — The young adults of the UMC are called to think local and act Global. In a world increasingly defined by crisis—political instability, economic injustice, climate change, and mass displacement—42 young adults see a different future: one guided by faith, service and deep commitment to community. On July 18 in Accra, Ghana, Global Ministries commissioned the 2025-2027 cohort of Global Mission Fellows to serve in 23 countries around the world for two years. While young adults range in age, background, and vocation, a common thread in their stories is clear—a calling to put faith into action and embody change through community.

Tom Chase

Parking

Now that winter is approaching, 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!



A Season of Thanksgiving: Gratitude, Fellowship, and Cake!

As the days grow shorter and the nights get cooler, we find ourselves entering a wonderful season of Thanksgiving. It's the perfect time to pause, reflect, and celebrate the many blessings and connections we share as a church family. Mark your calendars for these upcoming events planned to bring us together!

Gals' Lunch: A Gratitude Gathering

When: Thursday, November 13, at Noon

Where: Taco Del Gnar in Ridgway

Ladies, come ready to share your heart! This month's lunch is a special gratitude gathering. Be prepared to share a brief story about someone who has genuinely "blessed" your life. It's a beautiful way to acknowledge the people who make our journey brighter.

Fellowship and Celebrations

Fellowship Time

Remember the simple joy of connection! Each Sunday immediately after worship, we gather for our Fellowship Time to connect and catch up. Warning: You may discover a shared experience, an unexpected interest, or a new friend! It's an easy, casual way to strengthen the bonds within our church family.



October Birthdays

When: Sunday, October 26

Join us as we celebrate all of our members with October birthdays! We'll be giving a special cheer to our own talented fiddler, Julie Larussen, who will be celebrating her upcoming 90th birthday! Come wish her a happy day.

November Birthdays

When: Sunday, November 16

Let's celebrate our November folks! And for all the cake lovers, heads up: there may be carrot cake for this celebration. Don't miss out!

Pie Sunday!

When: Sunday, November 23

To fully usher in the holiday spirit, get ready for Pie Sunday! We'll have pie and more pie following worship. Whether you prefer apple, pumpkin, pecan, or cherry come enjoy a slice (or two!) and some sweet fellowship.



A Big Thank You!

We extend our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has so generously helped with fellowship coffee and treats over the past month. Your commitment to ensuring we have a warm, welcoming time after worship makes a huge difference! **Thank you to: David Stytz, Junella Hildreth, Jenny Cheek, Alice**

Goertz, Gen Spangler, Sandy Storey, Dave Young, Lisa Young, Gail Callahan, and Roger & Charlotte Duckett.

Congregational Life Ministry Team: Jenny Cheek, Sue Conrad, Charlotte Duckett, Junella Hildreth, Marge Quist, Lish Sheppard, Elise Shirey, Carolyn Snowbarger (chair), Gen Spangler, Angela Todd, Donna Whiskeman



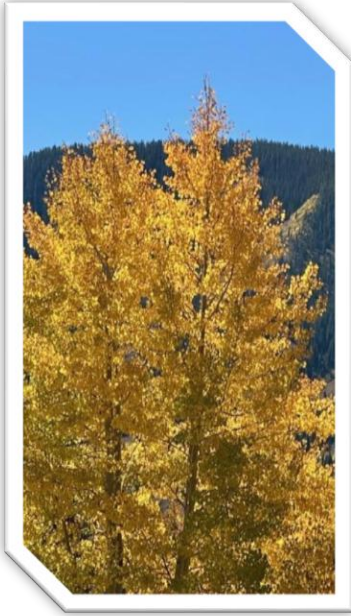
City Market Community Rewards

Thank you to the 19 households who helped UCSJ receive \$152.58 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.

Leaf Peeping

Pictures (courtesy of Carolyn Snowbarger), of the road trip to Gunnison, Crested Butte, and Kebler Pass on September 25.



Lubber Harvest Party

Pictures (courtesy of Lisa Young), from Gary & Kathy Calkin's gazebo on October 5.



Mission & Outreach



The UCSJ Mission & Outreach (M&O) Committee wants to thank everyone that participated in the Ridgway Teacher Appreciation Day event. We especially want to thank **Kate Kellogg, Bruce & Elise Shirey, and Donna Whiskeman** that delivered and set up the lunch for our teachers and staff on October 14. We had plenty of everything and our gratitude and thanks to our local educators was much appreciated.

Our up-coming activities for you to be involved with in November and December include:

- Operation Christmas Child boxes
- Ouray Food Pantry holiday items and meat donations
- Angel Tree Christmas gifts

We are excited to welcome Bruce Shirey and Betsy Lattanner to our M&O team.

If you are passionate about fostering community connections and organizing opportunities to share God's love with our community and the world, please talk to one of the M&O Committee members about joining our group.

M&O Committee: Charlotte Duckett, Kate Kellogg, Betsy Lattanner, Cindi Myers, Lucy Scholpp, Bruce Shirey, Donna Whiskeman, Claudia Wolff, and Lisa Young (chair)



Thursday, November 27



Mission & Outreach Congregation Involvement Project



Pictures (courtesy of Lisa Young) of the blankets that were made on September 10, being delivered to the Ridgway and Ouray law enforcement offices by **Donna Whiskeman, Jenny Cheek, and Charlotte Duckett**.

The blankets will go in first responder cars to be used during emergencies.

Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide

The November-December issues of *The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide* have arrived. They are on the table in front of the sanctuary. **Thank you to Bob McDaniel** for subscribing to these for the church. Please feel free to take one.



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. You can also contact Pastor Melinda or a member of the Care Team. The Care Team list is posted in the gathering area.

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



Bible Studies

Centering Prayer — Mondays at 9 AM via Zoom. Contact is Kathy Graff.

Women's Bible Study — Thursdays at 9:30 AM via Zoom through December.
Contact is Donna Whiskeman.

Men's Bible Study — Saturdays at 8:30 AM via Zoom. Contact is Bob Larson.

Education

The UCSJ Book Swap—is back by popular demand. All books have been moved inside to a shelf in the library—please look for the sign located by the west door—please leave the books you want to swap and find one that speaks to you.

On The Same Page, Monday morning bimonthly book study will have Marianne Guilingier facilitating the book *The God in the Woods*, by Liz Moore on **Monday, November 10, at 10 AM**. There are a few books (\$15) available on the pew located in the Narthex.

The January 2026, *On the Same Page* book review selection will be facilitated by Kate Kellogg and will be the book written by the author, Jane Goodall, *Reason for Hope*. The date is set for **Monday, January 19, at 10 AM**.

The Fall Community Learning Book Study and Soup Supper Gathering successfully completed the end of October. The books reviewed over the six-week time frame were *The Tears of Things* by Richard Rohr and *The Rhineland Mystics: An Anthology* by Oliver Davies.

Elise Shirey, Education Chair



Church Fall Cleanup Saturday, October 25 9:00 AM — Noon (Snacks etc. will be provided)

Please wear gloves, bring rakes, and trimmers. Window washing inside and out (NO high windows). Leaf bags and window wash will be supplied.

Hope to see you there—I will watch for inclement weather.

Joan Moyer, Operations Vice Chair



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

(2nd Wednesday)

Wednesday, November 12

2 PM

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



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BREAKFAST FORUM

(formally the Men's Breakfast)

NO Meetings in November and December!

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UCSJ QR Code

Scan to get up-to-date event information



So Many Ways to Help Out! We Need YOU!

Ushers, Greeters,
Readers, Worship Assistants,
Communion Assistants,
Treats, Coffee Prep and Clean Up, Flowers, etc.
Sign-up sheets are on the table in the gathering area
...please add your name!

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!



For up-to-date
information, including
newsletters, calendar, etc.
www.ucsjridgway.org

Connect with UCSJ!

We are affiliated with:

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



And like us!

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