

**Worship  
Sundays at 10 AM**

**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 295  
Ridgway, CO 81432

**Email:** [ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com)

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

**Facebook:** [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** — 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 *(Council 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)*

**From Ashes to Light: A Pilgrimage through Lent**



Lent is a sacred time to slow down and make space for God. It is a time to reflect on how we spend our time and how we spend our energy. Lent presents an opportunity to “get real” with ourselves and get real with God about ourselves. It’s also a time to deepen trust: trust that we can come to God as we are. Trust that God knows our flaws, our hopes, our disappointments, our challenges, and our weariness, and will ever meet us on the road.

A pilgrimage is a journey. It is an intentional quest to meet God in new ways and to encounter the person God has in mind for us to become. We open our minds and our hearts to see where we truly are in relation to God. We focus on where God has in mind for us to go. It is a time to gauge where we are off course and how we need to recalibrate to get back on course. Walking through Lent on pilgrimage offers us the space to slow down, to open up, and to connect more closely with the God who gives us breath and life.

This month we continue to pilgrimage through Lent, taking time each Wednesday afternoon to breathe and be still, to reflect and reconnect—with God and with one another—as we delve more deeply into the week’s Lenten theme, explored in the previous Sunday. Journaling, drawing, mixed media collage, walking meditation, music, are a few of the creative tools that will be available to engage individual reflection. Our time will close with refreshments and conversation as we continue the pilgrimage into the rest of the week.

We are great at talking about our faith. What is challenging is living it. Pilgrimage focuses us on the truth that our life is in the God who gives us breath. It’s not in our achievements. It’s not in our abilities. It’s not in our affiliations or affinity groups. Our very life, our very breath is in the love that flows from the Living Christ. Learning to walk more closely in that love—and becoming more and more aware of what trips us up—is the task of Lent. That is what it means to walk from ashes into light. And as we do that, individually and in community, we can celebrate, give thanks for, and live fully from the life and love we have and share in his Spirit.

*Blessings, Melinda*



### Calendar for March

(For more information, see page #s)

#### Sunday, March 1

10 AM — Communion

Following Worship — Celebrating Pastor Melinda’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary (pg. 4)

#### Monday, March 2 — 10 AM

On the Same Page Book Review (pg. 5)

#### Wednesday, March 11 — 2 PM

Full Council Meeting

#### Thursday, March 19 — 12 PM

Gals’ Lunch at Lazy Dog, Ridgway (pg. 4)

#### Saturday, March 21 — 8:30 AM

Breakfast Forum (pg. 7)

#### Sunday, March 29 — Palm Sunday

Following Worship — March Birthday Celebration (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 — 4 PM

From Ashes to Light (pg. 5)  
February 25—March 25

#### THURSDAYS — 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.



### Council Highlights!

Your Administrative Committee met on February 11 and along with the usual business made several decisions:

- Purchase of new dishwashers was approved, with Carolyn Snowbarger leading the charge.
- The Breakfast Forum speaker Kathryn Wilder will be allowed to sell her books at the Forum on February 21.
- Details for a Sourdough Baking class by Amy Ericksen will be presented to Council in March, this could be a good outreach and fun class.
- Gravel has been spread over the handicapped parking to help prevent the ice buildup. Still be careful in that area!
- The Nominating Committee will be convened soon to begin the process of recommending new Council members at the Annual Meeting in June. Positions up for election include, Vice-Chair Operations, Vice-Chair Ministries, Worship & Music, Congregational Life, Education, Care as well as Nominating Committee. If you want to know about any of these positions or are in the least bit interested, please talk to a Council Member.
- A Bylaw review group will be formed to make recommendations regarding the Annual Meeting voting procedure. If you are interested, contact the Council Chair.
- The handicapped and street parking along with the sidewalks are being plowed by **Tom Edder**. He is not charging us so please let him know you appreciate the gift.
- The Communications Committee will remedy the newspaper ad clarity. The membership list and Friday NewsLink recipient list will be reviewed at the next Council meeting, as per our bylaws.

The next meeting will be for Full Council on Wednesday, March 11 at 2 PM at the church. Please join us or let a Council member know if you have a compliment or concern. Both are encouraged.

*Blessings, Pam Larson, Council Chair*



### UCSJ Family and Friends Directory

Address, phone, email changes, or if you wish to be removed from the directory. Please email [ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com) or leave a detailed message on the church phone (970) 626-5803.

## 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 January 31, 2026

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income ABOVE Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$132,323	\$123,084	\$9,239	\$211,000
Expenses	\$122,904			
Net GAIN	\$ 9,419			

*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)

**March 1**



## PLUM Corner



**P**resbyterian —

**L**utheran ELCA —

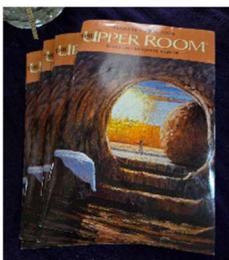
**U**nited Church of Christ —

**M**ethodist — **Serving United Methodist Students GBHEM Scholarships** offer financial aid to United Methodist students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees. Every year, an average of \$4 million is awarded to help students in the United States and abroad pursue their dreams through higher education. With this financial aid, GBHEM is opening pathways for students of all backgrounds to earn their degrees and serve as the next generation of leaders for the church and the world.

### How to Apply for Scholarships at U.S. Institutions

The GBHEM scholarship application opens in January each year for United Methodist students enrolled at a higher education institution in the United States. [Learn more here.](#)

*Tom Chase*



## Upper Room Daily Devotional

The March through April "Upper Room" have arrived and are available on the table in the gathering area. Feel free to take one home.

## Coffee, Celebrations, and Mountain Adventures from Your Congregational Life Ministry Team

### A “Percolating” Update on Our Coffee Poll!

The results of our coffee tasting are in, and it turns out we are a house divided—in the most caffeinated way possible! We ended in a dead heat between the organic, ethically sourced breakfast blend and the classic, no-nonsense punch of dark Folgers. Honestly, this split decision is a perfect metaphor for the beautiful diversity here at UCSJ. Whatever coffee you prefer, there’s a seat for you at our fellowship table. And the journey continues! We’ll be sampling various new blends throughout the spring. All you need to do is stick around after worship and grab a cup.

### Milestones and March Gatherings

- **Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary, Pastor Melinda! Sunday, March 1,** marks three years since Pastor Melinda joined our family. To celebrate, we’ll be serving her favorite—chocolate cake with fudge icing—during fellowship. Don’t miss it!
- **A Joyful Gals’ Lunch — Thursday, March 19, at 12 PM, at Lazy Dog in Ridgway.** Join us as we create our own “Joy List.” Come ready to share one thing that has brought you unexpected joy this past week!
- **March Birthday Celebration — Sunday, March 29, following Worship.** It’s time to party! We will gather to celebrate all those in our church family born in March. Come for the fellowship, stay for the dessert!

### Summer Excursion: Mountain Adventures in Creede, July 28–30

- **Get it on your calendar!** If you love the mountains, world-class theater, and outdoor adventures, this trip is for you. While it’s five months away, now is the time to start planning.
- **Getting There:** Travel via the scenic Silver Thread (Hwy 149) from the north or south (approx. 3.5 hours). For the more adventurous, 4-wheeling from Silverton to Creede is a full-day experience!
- **Lodging:** The Snowshoe Lodge (719) 658-2315 is the only motel in town, but more options are available at [creede.com](http://creede.com) or at local campgrounds. Most of the group will stay the nights of July 28–29.
- **The Theater:** You should catch one or more of the incredible shows at the Creede Repertory Theatre including:
  - *Working* (Musical tribute to the American workforce)—Tuesday, at 7 PM
  - *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Heartfelt comedy)—Wednesday, at 1 PM
  - *Fully Committed* (A one-actor tour de force)—Wednesday, at 7 PM
- **Daytime Fun:** Choose your own adventure! Hiking, the Underground Mining Museum, fishing, or a drive to the Wheeler Geologic Area.



Interested? Please contact Carolyn Snowbarger or sign up in the gathering area so we can keep you updated on theater tickets and lodging.



### A Heartfelt Thank You

Our fellowship time wouldn’t be possible without our wonderful volunteers. A huge “Thank You” to **Alice Goertz, Lisa Young, Lucy Ledgerwood, and David Stytz** for providing the coffee and delicious treats this past month. Your service sweetens our Sundays! Want to help? You can sign up to bring treats for future Sundays in the gathering area!

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

## Education

### From Ashes to Light: A Pilgrimage through Lent

WEDNESDAYS from 4 to 5:30 PM (February 25 to March 25)

Facilitated by Pastor Melinda

A thought filled 5-weeks in Lent, Wednesday afternoon study. Refreshments will be provided.

Week 1 (February 25)—Moving from Expectation on to Living Expectantly

Week 2 (March 4)—Moving from Performance to Participation

Week 3 (March 11)—Moving from Anxiety to Acceptance

Week 4 (March 18)—Moving from Resentment to Reconciliation

Week 5 (March 25)—Journeying to Joy



### “On the Same Page” Book Review

**Monday, March 2, at 10 AM** — **Carolyn Snowbarger** will be facilitating the book *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi for the “On the Same Page” bi-monthly book study. This is a great opportunity to hear about this originally self-published book that has brought so much joy and light.

The May “On the Same Page” facilitator is our very well-traveled and back from one of her adventures **Lisa Young**. She will be covering the book, *Our Lady of the Lost and Found* by Diane Schoemperlen. Books (\$15) will be available for purchase on the pew in the narthex by the front door beginning March 2.

### Spring 2026 Wednesday Community Book and Soup Supper Begins April 8, from 4:30–6 PM

A vegetarian and meat choice of soup signup will be offered by one of our church founders and leaders Mick Graff, who has graciously once again agreed to head the voting process and soup signup each week.



**Please return your one vote—before March 8** (1/2 votes accepted) to Mick Graff [mickgraff4@gmail.com](mailto:mickgraff4@gmail.com) or Elise Shirey [elishirey@gmail.com](mailto:elishirey@gmail.com).

The books to be voted on are listed below and will be available for review in the narthex until March 8.

*The Orthodox Way* by Kallistos Ware—A book that helps the reader study the mystery of God.

*Prayer In the Night* by Trish Warren—A grounding read exploring doubt and loss.

*The Third Day: Living the Resurrection* by Tom Berlin—a book that connects the reader to experiences in Jesus’s final days.

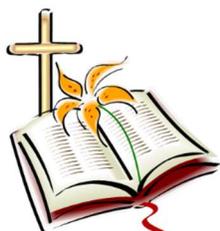
*The Heart Centering Prayer* by Cynthia Bourgeault—Nondual Christianity in Theory and Practice.

*Anam Cara—A book of Celtic Wisdom* by John O’Donohue—Poetry, Spirituality, Creativity...

*A Beautiful Year* by Diana Butler Bass—Meditations on Faith, Perseverance, Wisdom...

**The UCSJ Book Swap**—Thank you for the fresh supply of books being donated regularly. You can find the books available on the inside shelf in the library—please look for the sign located by the west door.

*Elise Shirey, Education Chair*



### Bible Studies

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

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

## Mission & Outreach

The UCSJ Mission & Outreach (M&O) Committee is excited to have such dedicated participation in the projects we have offered to our congregation this year. During March, be prepared to bring in shelf-stable food items for the **Ouray County Food Pantry**. We'd like to focus on **cleaning products, personal items such as hand lotion and deodorant, and cereal that is not corn flakes or honey oat flakes.** (All other donations are still very welcome!)



Many families in our local community depend on this resource for nutritious, healthy food. The Pantry is funded through monetary donations from individuals and foundation grants. Operating expenses include food purchases, taxes, insurance, general maintenance, and utilities.

Ouray County Food Pantry is operated exclusively by volunteers. There are no paid staff. Volunteers typically work one Thursday a month. Persons interested in volunteering can use [this link to the Volunteer Signup Page](#) that shows positions available for specific dates and times.

If you have ideas for mission or outreach projects, whether local or beyond our region, please feel free to share your thoughts with one of the members in our group. The current M&O Committee members are Lisa Young (chair), Charlotte Duckett, Claudia Wolff, Kate Kellogg, Donna Whiskeman, Cindi Myers, Lucy Scholpp, Betsy Lattanner, Gini Barker, Randy Kee, and Bruce Shirey.

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## Lent and Holy Week!

**From Ashes to Light: A Pilgrimage through Lent**, facilitated by Pastor Melinda. **WEDNESDAYS** from 4 to 5:30 PM (February 25 to March 25) (*see page 5 for details*).

Ash Wednesday, February 18, at 4:30 PM—Taizé service

Palm Sunday, March 29

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Good Friday, April 3 at 7 PM—A Tenebrae service

Easter Sunday, April 5

7 AM—Sunrise Service on Log Hill

8–9:30 AM—Potluck Brunch

10 AM—Easter Worship Service



# Palm Sunday March 29



### Caring for One Another . . .

The love and sympathy of the UCSJ family is with the family of **Margaret Fredericks, mother of Betsy Lattanner**, who passed away on February 13, 2026.

*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.*

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

### Breakfast Forum — Saturday, March 21, at 8:30 AM

Jane Thompson will give a presentation on the History of Uravan, Colorado. Uravan was wiped off the map nearly 40 years ago. Uravan was a uranium company town established in Montrose County in 1939. Now it's a superfund site because of its hazardous waste. Uravan was a mill surrounded by a large number of uranium mines where quite a few people lived and worked. In the 1980s the federal government declared Uravan unsafe because of radioactivity, and around 800 people had to move. The whole town was torn down, buried and is now just a patch of empty land that has been remediated.



Jane is a third generation Uravan and Nucla resident for over 45 years on the West End. She is passionate about the history of the area. Her family's life started when her grandparents moved to Uravan so that her grandfather could work in the uranium business to support his farm. Jane is the president of the Rimrocker Historical Society and the local museum of Nucla.

*Submitted by Ken Sloan*



Remember to set your clocks **AHEAD** one hour.

**Sunday, March 8  
At 2 AM**

### March Birthdays

- 1 – Lysa Riggs
- 2 – Kathy Calkins
- 4 – Pam Larson
- 4 – Larry Krafft
- 6 – Janet Petersen
- 8 – Barbara Kelly
- 13 – Niki Kop
- 14 – Alice Hill
- 20 – Robert Hart
- 21 – Max Sheppard
- 21 – Charlie Carson
- 27 – Kim Lundgren
- 28 – Dick Engdahl
- 30 – Gini Barker

### March Anniversaries

- 1 – Bill & Sue Hirshman
- 23 – Ken & Anne Linenberger
- 25 – Vince & Carolyn Snowbarger

Please contact the church office ([ucsjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ucsjoffice@gmail.com) or (970) 626-5803 if we are missing your birthday and/or anniversary.

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### Full Council Meeting

(2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday)



**Wednesday, March 11**

**2 PM**

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

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UCSJ QR Code

Scan to get up-to-date events 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!



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*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!*

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For up-to-date  
information, including  
newsletters, calendar, etc.  
[www.ucsjridgway.org](http://www.ucsjridgway.org)



And like us!

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

### Connect with UCSJ!

*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