

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 *(Council Chair)*

Betsy Lattanner *(Worship & Music)*

Elise Shirey *(Education)*

Carolyn Snowbarger *(Ministry)*

Vince Snowbarger *(Finance)*

Tim Spangler *(Operations)*

Terry Thomas *(Congregational Life)*

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)



By the time you read this, fall will be just three and a half weeks away. While the summer has flown by faster than I realized, I am glad to be moving into a new season.

The fires, the smoke, the drought and the flooding have created a sense of anxiety that has continued since the first flames sparked the blaze that has now consumed literally miles of terrain.

And while life has gone on, there has been an unmistakable shift. Now we have experienced a fire, up-close and personal. We have watched as flames roved across the landscape devouring everything in their path in the dark of night. We have smelled the smoke as it obscured our view of mountains and sky in the broad light of day. And though needed rain has come, it has been a mixed blessing, bringing flooding and mud slides that have created more crises.

Yet in the midst of it all, and maybe in spite of it, this church has remained a loving and caring community, reaching out to address needs within and beyond our doors. We have been coming alongside one another, walking with each other, encouraging one another, and holding onto each other. That takes the discipline of hope: looking at the challenges we have all been facing but also focusing on the One who gives us breath and seeing clearly what we have to give as we keep walking together through difficult times.

We can't do that without faith—or the compassion that faith fosters. We can't do that without the humility that faith brings—a humility that helps us see ourselves as a part of God's work, even in the very center of tragic events and circumstances.

We often mistakenly think that showing up to participate in what God is doing requires that we be perfect before we can get started. Actually, God is looking for us to show up as we are, trust God enough to be available, bring what we have, and keep looking out for opportunities to join in whatever God is doing.

As we move together into this new season, opportunities to participate in what God is doing will keep showing up—in this church community and beyond it. I look forward to seeing how we will all continue that discipline of hope that focuses us on what God is doing and how we can get in on it—because that, actually is what perfection is all about.

Blessings, Melinda

Calendar for September

(For more information, see page #s)

Wednesday, September 2 — 5:30 PM

Ladies' Happy Hour, Jenny Cheek's home (pg. 6)

Sunday, September 6 — 10 AM

Communion

Monday, September 7



Wednesday, September 9 — 2 PM

Administrative Committee Meeting (pg. 2)

Monday, September 14 — 10 AM

On the Same Page Book Review (pg. 5)

Thursday, September 17 — 2 PM

Gals' Sweet Escape, Camp Robber, Montrose (pg. 6)

Saturday, September 19 — 9 AM

Breakfast Forum (pg. 7)

Sunday, September 20 — Following Worship

Celebrating September Birthdays (pg. 6)

Thursday, September 24 — 8:30 AM

Leaf Peeping, Looney Bean, Montrose (pg. 6)

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Weekly Activities



SUNDAYS

8:30 AM — Choir Practice

10 AM — Worship Service

(Communion is served the first Sunday of each month)

MONDAYS — 9 AM ([via Zoom](#))

Centering Prayer

WEDNESDAYS

10 AM ([via Zoom](#)) — Women's Bible Study

NO Meetings in September (pg. 2)

4:30 PM — Community Book Study and Soup Supper (pg.5) (Begins September 23)

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!

Our UCSJ Council had a meeting in August that highlighted several items beyond normal business:

- There was an August Ministry Retreat at which the Ministry Representatives and Chairpersons participated.
- The OCPAG Salon Concert was held in the church with the understanding that paid admission to this event was an exception to our normal practice. Dave Conrad was the church liaison and Sara Sharp the caterer.
- The Handicapped Parking Committee presented options to expand parking on the west alley side of the church toward the south. The focus will be on sidewalks, graded gravel parking, moving of the dumpster, fence, and shed. Costs and permits are now being obtained and will be presented to the Administrative Committee for approval.
- The Council discussed the San Juan Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) and in addition to asking for more information, agreed to participate.

The next Council meeting is for the Administrative Committee and will be on Wednesday, September 9, at 2 PM at church. And as always, please join us or send us your questions and concerns.

Blessings, Pam Larson, Council Chair

Women's Bible Study

The women's Bible Study has finished its first session, a look at some of the songs people through the ages have sung in praise of God.

The group will take the month of September off, but now is your chance to get involved. Is there a book in the Bible which has always puzzled you? Are you one of the people who started to read the Bible from cover to cover and got so bogged down in Deuteronomy, Leviticus, and Numbers that you gave it up? Have you ever wondered about how ancient words can speak to the problems of today? Have you ever had questions about the Bible that you were afraid to ask?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, talk to Carol Layton! Carol is going to create a study based on your input, and whether a basic introduction or a deep theological discussion, she will meet you there. The session will last six weeks with a break for Advent and Christmas. Carol can be reached by phone, email, or conversation on Sunday morning, and is looking forward to hearing from you!

Carol Layton



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 July 31, 2026

	YTD Actual	Year-to-Date Goal	Income ABOVE Goal	Annual Budget
Income	\$ 21,630	\$18,333	\$3,297	\$220,000
Expenses	\$ 18,851			
Net GAIN	\$ 2,779			

Sue Stern, Treasurer

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)
September 6

Mission & Outreach

The UCSJ Mission & Outreach (M&O) Committee is focusing our projects on "Serving in Practical Ways." The M&O Committee chose to make donations this quarter to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America/Disaster Relief for \$600 and to the Gold Mountain Fire Fund through the Telluride Foundation for \$1,000.

We want to thank everyone that participated in the Educational Staff Appreciation Breakfasts for our Ouray County teachers and staff. The Ouray School breakfast was August 18th and Ridgway Elementary and Secondary Schools breakfasts on August 20th. **A special thanks go to Pam and Bob Larson, Doug Hanshaw, and Melissa Garner for setting up in Ouray; Bruce and Elise Shirey for the setup at Ridgway Secondary; and Ken Linenberger, Alice Goertz, and Cindi Myers for the setup at Ridgway Elementary.** There were delicious spreads for our teachers, which they very much appreciated. We hope they recognize how much we value their service and work with the county's youth. Check out the photos below!



(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

We will be collecting donations for Peace Jam during the months of August and September for delivery to the Ute reservation in Towaoc in October. Please leave your donations in the church library.

Sveri May indicated they are accepting the following items:

- blankets, sheets, and pillows
- kitchen items such as cooking utensils and cookware
- clothing, especially shoes and winter boots for adults and kids school supplies like pencils, markers, notebooks, folders, etc.
- non-perishable food, (i.e. canned soup and dried beans)
- reusable grocery bags
- gently used furniture
- toys for kids of all ages
- baby and toddler items, such as strollers, cribs and car seats that comply with state and federal safety requirements



NOTE: If Sveri's and Geoff's garages fill up we might need a volunteer who lives in town to provide additional storage space for donations.

If you have questions, contact Kate Kellogg, our champion for Peace Jam, at katebkellogg@gmail.com.

Later in September, we will be accepting monetary gifts as part of a special offering for specific items needed at Shepherd's Hand. For those unfamiliar with it, Shepherd's Hand is a Christian nonprofit organization committed to serving the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of individuals experiencing homelessness or economic hardship. It is located at 505 S. 2nd St. in Montrose. Your donations will allow us to purchase XL hoodies, men's jeans, sleeping bags, and backpacks that are very much needed but not frequently donated. Thank you for considering what you can give to help bring hope and support to those who need it most.



Lisa Young, Mission & Outreach Representative



PLUM Corner

As we move into September and Fall, I hope you'll enjoy some cooler weather. Hopefully... some golden aspens yet to come. Our PLUM denominations have been busy. These are a few things, and as always visit their websites for more news.

Kim Lundgren

Presbyterian — A recent webinar designed for donors to the PILLARS community focused on the multifaceted work of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. [Click here to read more.](#)

Lutheran ELCA — In "Stolen Stories," a 5-part educational video series by ELCA Sumud, listen to the voices of Palestinian siblings in Christ as they recount their historical narrative from pre-1948 to present day. [Click here to view Episode 1.](#)



United Church of Christ — The United Church of Christ enlists the power of technology to deliver webinars—a digital experience of connection, inspiration, innovation, education, worship, and more. Many past webinars are recorded and available for your viewing too. [Click here for late August and September webinars from UCC.](#)

Methodist — News I had to share... This Methodist church TV ministry started 50 years ago in my hometown of Wichita, Kansas... at a UMC church a few blocks from where I lived after college. [Click here for details.](#)

Education

“On the Same Page” Book Review — Monday, September 14, at 10 AM

***The Noticer: Sometimes, All a Person Needs is a Little Perspective* by Andy Andrews**

A priceless book quote... “Incidentally,” he said with a smirk, “you ate sardines and Vienna sausages in the sand. I dined on surf and turf with an ocean view.” He slapped me on the back. “It’s all about perspective.” Come and join the fellowship and lively discussion on the above book and quote **facilitated by Elise Shirey**. Books are available on the pew by the front door (\$15). Or consider purchasing from your area bookstore, Amazon, or borrowing from the library as it has knowledge and guidance needed for everyone.

Fall Community Book Study

Beginning Wednesday, September 23 — ending date TBD

Book Study (4-5 PM) followed by Soup and Bread Culinary Experience (5-6 PM)



The following Books were chosen from your submissions and will be made available to touch, peruse and vote on in the Narthex starting Sunday, August 23. Two of the books below will be chosen from your voting choices. Please send your vote for the books of choice to Mick Graff mickgraff4@gmail.com or Elise Shirey elisheshirey@gmail.com and **YES** you can vote on several. **Deadline to vote is Sunday, September 6.**

1. *Yesterday’s Voices, Today’s Choices* by Pastor Harry L. Strong, former minister of many congregations including UCSJ—What if the men and women of the Bible could step off the page and speak directly to modern readers? In this compelling collection of eighteen sermon-dramas, Pastor Harry gives readers that opportunity. Drawing on decades of ministry, Strong brings iconic biblical figures to life—from King David and Judas Iscariot to the shepherds of Bethlehem—A Zoom offering on the night of the gathering’s will be explored with this book.
2. *The Wisdom of the Enneagram* by Riso and Hudson—A guide to using the wisdom of the Enneagram for spiritual and psychological growth in your daily life.
3. *On the Road with Saint Augustine* by James K.A. Smith—Augustine’s timeless wisdom reviewed—speaks to the worries and struggles of contemporary life.
4. *The Beauty Chasers* by Timothy Willard—Reimagining, finding, and seeing again is the overall pursuit of this book. It’s a beautifully written book that will wake up your mind and senses.
5. *The Orthodox Way* by Kallistos Ware—A guided spiritual journey, this book takes the reader into the very mystery of God, speaks to the reader of today, opening minds and spirits.
6. *A Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* by Hannah Whitall Smith—Discovering ways to handle the stressors in our life in a healthy way through Jesus Christ.

Teaser... The November “On the Same Page” Book Review

Monday, November 2, at 10 AM, Facilitator will be Pam Larson

The book she has chosen to review is one of her all-time favorites: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by CS Lewis. Stay tuned as Pam and various other readers will be revealing their favorite quote from the book.

Elise Shirey, Education Representative



A BIG thank you to all of you that graciously worked with Max Sheppard and me to update the photos in the church directory, plus Dennis & Barbara Eliason working behind the scene.

Charlotte Duckett, Membership Development Representative

Congregational Life



Free Children and Family Concert
Featuring Max Levinson and the Ulysses Quartet
Co-sponsored with the Ouray County Performing Arts Guild
A fun experience featuring classical music
Sunday, August 30, at 2 PM
Ice Cream Sundaes following the concert

End of Summer Ladies' Happy Hour — Wednesday, September 2, from 5:30-7:30 PM

Jenny Cheek's home on Log Hill

Sign up: In the Gathering Area

Details: Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share (finger foods).

If you haven't been to one before, we guarantee you'll love sitting on the deck, eating, chatting, and catching up with others.

Gals' Sweet Escape — Thursday, September 17, at 2 PM at Camp Robber in Montrose

Let's just do it! Instead of a healthy lunch, **let's treat ourselves to dessert**. I promise you'll want to sample more than one (sharing IS caring). Some of their special desserts include mud pie, chocolate raspberry cake, key lime pie, peanut butter pie, brownie sundae parfait, and chocolate crème Brulé.



Celebrating September Birthdays — Sunday, September 20, Following Worship

Bob McDaniel will be 94 on this day, so he will pick the cake flavor. Come and enjoy his favorite!

Leaf Peeping

Thursday, September 24, at 8:30 AM, meet at Looney Bean, 3480 Wolverine Dr, Montrose

Route & Planned Stops:

Travel via US 550, Niagara, Hillcrest, and E Main/Hwy 50 to Gunnison.

Stop 1: City Market in Gunnison (880 N Main).

Travel north via CO-135 to Crested Butte, including a short gravel roadside trip to the ski area.

Stop 2 (Lunch): Secret Stash in Crested Butte (303 Elk Avenue).

Stop 3: Kebler Pass via 1st St and Whiterock Ave.

Return route continues via CO-135 to US 50 back to Montrose.



Carolyn Snowbarger, Ministry Vice Chair and Gen Spangler, Congregational Life Chair



Dorothy Halasz was honored at the Brass Band Concert in Silverton for her upcoming 101st birthday on September 9th. Folks from UCSJ and Neighbor to Neighbor were there to cheer her on!

Donna Whiskeman

Kudos to Our Church Family: Celebrating Kelvin Kent and Barbara Kendrick



Our church family is blessed with remarkable individuals whose talents, dedication, and service reach far beyond our church walls. This summer we have the special privilege of celebrating two who have recently received significant, well-deserved honors: **Kelvin Kent and Barbara Kendrick**.

Kelvin Kent was recently honored at Buckingham Palace in recognition of his distinguished years of military service. Kelvin served as an officer in the British Army for 16 years, including eight years of elite service in the special forces with the renowned British Brigade of Gurkhas. Demonstrating his exceptional skill in planning and endurance, he also served on the logistics team for an expedition to Mt. Everest. We salute Kelvin for this royal honor and thank him for his enduring legacy of leadership and courage.

Barbara Kendrick has been selected as one of only seven featured artists recognized by the Western Colorado Community Foundation as part of the Colorado 150 initiatives. This regional project celebrates Colorado's 150th anniversary by highlighting the unique spirit, beauty, and landscapes of Western Colorado through the arts. Barbara's creative vision captures the heart of our region, and we are thrilled to see her extraordinary talent recognized across the state.

Please join us to congratulate both Kelvin and Barbara!

Alice Goertz, Care Ministry Representative

Breakfast Forum — Saturday September 19, at 9 AM

Steve Cumella of Ouray will give a talk on the "Geology of the National Parks using High-Resolution Google Earth." Some National Parks have amazingly detailed 3D imagery that allows us to see many interesting geologic features. An example would be to see cross beds in the Navajo Sand Dunes at Zion National Park.



Steve is a geologist who is president of the Ouray Geology Group. He will show you how to use High-Resolution Google Earth to pull up these kinds of High-Resolution pictures.

This is another potluck breakfast so start thinking about your favorite dish to bring.

Ken Sloan

September Birthdays

- 7 – Tim Spangler
- 9 – Dorothy Halasz
- 9 – Carolyn Snowbarger
- 13 – Cliona Pasek
- 14 – Patty Ratliff
- 16 – Vince Snowbarger
- 20 – Robert McDaniel
- 20 – Randal Fischer
- 24 – Jenny Cheek
- 27 – Judy Hazen
- 29 – Fred Quist

September Anniversaries

- 5 – Jim & Susan Wing
- 9 – Kay & Jack Sibold
- 23 – Paul & LaVonne Glanville
- 30 – Randal & Deborah Fischer

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

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Administrative Committee Meeting

(2nd Wednesday)



Wednesday, September 9
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



Bible Studies

Centering Prayer — Mondays at 9 AM, [via Zoom](#). Contact is Kathy Graff.

Women's Bible Study — Wednesdays at 10 AM, [via Zoom](#) (NO meetings in September).

Next session needs some input from YOU (see page 2 for details).

Contact is Carol Layton.

Men's Bible Study — Saturdays at 8:30 AM, [via Zoom](#). Contact is Bob Larson.

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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PO Box 295—Ridgway, CO