



THE UNITED CHURCH OF THE SAN JUANS

The United Church of the San Juans (“UCSJ”) is an ecumenical faith community located in rural, southwestern Colorado. UCSJ is a vibrant church family that respects the dignity and integrity of each individual. UCSJ is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. Our Pastor must be ordained or accepted according to the practices of one or more of the denominations for service. We are seeking an experienced pastor who can relate to and challenge our well-educated, professional congregation.

Our Mission

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that respects the dignity and integrity of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

Our Location

UCSJ is in Ouray County (population 4,436) located in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado and includes three small towns, Colona, Ouray, and Ridgway. Located in Ridgway, UCSJ serves the population in our county and surrounding areas. We also draw people from the largest town in our area, Montrose, located about 25 miles away. The San Juan Mountains attract visitors for skiing in winter, hiking, and jeeping during summer, and fall hunting.

Ouray County has a rich history beginning with our earliest residents, the Ute Indians. Ridgway was founded in 1890 as the headquarters of the Rio Grande Southern narrow-gauge railroad serving the area’s rich silver and gold mines, ranches and farms and has been designated as a “Creative Arts District.” The town of Ouray, 10 miles south of Ridgway, is the county seat and was founded in 1876 during the height of the silver and gold rush days. Currently Ouray has a strong tourist draw as the “Gem of the Rockies” and “Little Switzerland.”

Ridgway and Ouray have restaurants, limited shopping, and some services available. Most medical services and shopping are available in Montrose. Both Ridgway and Ouray have recreational, historical, and arts activities, and have small K-12 school districts. Ridgway has three churches: Ridgway Community Church, Church of Christ, and UCSJ. Ouray has five churches: Catholic, Episcopal, Baptist, Assembly of God, and The Ouray

Christian Fellowship. Employment in the county is dominated by tourist businesses, with construction, real estate, ranching, mining, schools, and government services also providing jobs.

Our Congregation

Our congregation is representative of the older demographic in our county. Many have moved to the area upon retirement after living and working in other parts of the country. Some in our congregation are still working full and part-time, and we do have a small group of teens and children.

Most in our congregation attend our traditional Sunday worship service weekly. They are involved in many of our other activities, and the church is a priority in their lives. Many in our church also are actively engaged in a variety of community activities. Although our members and friends come from many different denominations and have varied theological backgrounds, we accept everyone wherever they are on their faith journey. Our visitors are welcomed and find it easy to get involved at UCSJ.

UCSJ has 124 members as of July 31, 2017. This number includes 27 associate members, who retain their primary church membership and residence elsewhere. Our attendance fluctuates seasonally due to our summer residents and snowbirds. Ouray County has many part-time residents, including approximately one-third of UCSJ's members who live elsewhere for 4-6 months of the year.

Each year UCSJ contributes 10% of its general receipts from donations of members and friends (not counting donations designated by the donors to be used for specific purposes) to our four Denominations. This amount is divided equally among the Denominations to be used for their operations and missions.

Our building including two adjacent lots are paid for, so UCSJ is debt-free. The neighboring land was purchased to allow for future expansion.

Our Organization and Ministries

United Church of the San Juans is governed by its Church Council with voting members being the Pastor and nine lay members. Council members serve two-year terms and are elected by the congregation. Council chair and vice chair are elected annually by the council. UCSJ currently has nine ministries with each chaired by a member of our Church Council. These include the following:

- Administration and Finance: Leads and coordinates administrative, budget, finance, and personnel
- Building and Maintenance: Manages and maintains the church buildings, property and equipment in good state of repair and in full working order
- Care Ministry: Provides support and assistance, as the specific situation dictates, for members and friends of UCSJ who are in need

- Congregational Life: Manages all congregational fellowship and social aspects of our church and coordinates the monthly newsletter
- Denominational Relations: Manages our affiliation agreements
- Equipping and Education: Offer opportunities for church members and friends to continue their spiritual growth
- Mission and Outreach: Coordinate UCSJ involvement, both financial and otherwise in local and non-local organizations
- Membership Development and Retention: Work with the Pastor in new member recruiting, development, and retention of members and friends of the church
- Worship and Music: Manage all activities attendant to UCSJ worship and music

Our church staff includes a half-time administrative assistant and three contracted employees: a choir director, treasurer, and custodian.

Our History

On January 20, 2003, eighteen people gathered to explore the possibility of forming a new church in Ouray County. A steering committee was formed, a church name was selected, and a Mission Statement was developed to reflect our diversity and backgrounds as believers. In 2005 a Memorandum of Understanding among UCSJ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church was completed which provided for a temporary affiliation of UCSJ with these four Denominations. In 2009 this affiliation was made permanent and further defined by completion of a new Affiliation Agreement which has been ratified by all four denominations.

UCSJ purchased three lots on the southwest corner of Lena and Charles Streets in 2006. The property was paid for through donations, and pledges were sought to erect a new church building. Groundbreaking for our new church sanctuary building was held on October 12, 2008. Our first worship service in our new facility was held July 19, 2009, and a Celebration of Dedication was held August 16, 2009. In 2016 two neighboring lots were purchased.

Our church has had three ministers. Dr. Richard Engdahl, a retired Presbyterian minister, served as a volunteer/part-time pastor during our first eight years and is now a member of the congregation. Rev. Harry Strong, another retired Presbyterian minister, was our part-time minister from 2011 until 2014. Rev. Leslie Wood, a Methodist, was our first full-time minister from 2015 until June of 2017.

For more information: See our website at <http://www.ucsjridgway.org>.

Major Pastoral Duties

UCSJ is seeking a full-time Pastor who will fulfill the following responsibilities and who has the following personal characteristics:

Worship Leadership and Preaching

- Provides interesting, thought-provoking, and pertinent sermons
- Considers music an important part of a worship service
- Oversees the spiritual needs of the congregation
- Respects the traditions of the Christian Church and the four denominations of UCSJ

Ministry to Families and Individuals

- Provides pastoral care to congregation and friends
- Creates relationships with members and friends of the church
- Provides support during personal crises
- Provides pastoral counseling or referrals as needed

Leadership to the Church

- Works closely with church council, ministry chairs, and volunteers
- Provides organizational direction and administrative oversight
- Leads an ongoing process of visioning and prioritization
- Leads and participates in study groups
- Maintains regular office hours

Community Involvement and Outreach

- Resides in and joins in the broader community
- Is encouraged to attend social functions organized by and for the congregation and friends
- Is seen and known in our community
- Is willing to interface with other area pastors on a regular basis

These responsibilities will be refined based upon discussions between the Council and the Pastor and reflected in the annual contract. Depending on the experiences of the selected Pastor, he or she will be provided a total compensation package in the range of \$75,000-\$100,000 per year. This package will include salary, housing allowance, and applicable benefits, the details of which are negotiable.

If you are interested, please send your resume to our Pastor Search Team at ucsjsearch@gmail.com.