

# The Bell Tower

December, 2013

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of caring friends and neighbors . . . growing to live our motto: *open doors, open minds, open hearts*



*Advent Thank You...*



...to all of you who helped hang the greens, decorate the tree and put on a great potluck lunch on the first Sunday of Advent.

Also, there would have been no tree to decorate without the adult and youth stalwarts who cut the tree, hauled it to the church and set it up for those who decorated it.



Tree cutting crew at Lutz home

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Future accompanists in training



While some were hanging the greens and decorating the tree, the choir was practicing for Advent and Christmas Eve services—all are welcome; contact Emily Haynes—while a couple others chatted and sorted various Christmas tree decorations by the piano.



## Alternative Christmas Giving

So much of Christmas these days is buying and getting *stuff*. There's nothing wrong with sweaters and electric shavers and stockings full of candy; but Jesus came to give himself, and to inspire us to help those in need. Here are a few opportunities at NCPCC, for you to share in some alternative giving.

- Go to [www.pcusaspecialofferings.com](http://www.pcusaspecialofferings.com) to **order your Christmas cards**. They are attractive, may be customized to your wishes, and 100% of the proceeds support a variety of Presbyterian mission initiatives: local and global peacemaking, ministry to at-risk children, continued disaster recovery, hunger relief, empowering the poor, and more!
- During worship on Dec 22, you can join tens of thousands of Presbyterians in contributing to the **Christmas Joy Offering**. 50% of the offering supports education and leadership development at Presbyterian-related racial and ethnic colleges and schools; and 50% of the offering supports retired pastors and church workers in need.
- At both Christmas Eve services, the offering will support our congregation's **Deacon's Fund**, which supports local neighbors in need. We help folks with all sorts of issues, from food to health care, vehicle reliability to electricity bills, warm clothes to baby supplies. This little bit of support can go a long way.
- Give to the **Nederland Food Pantry** in someone's honor. The pantry does much more than simply providing food for those in our community who are in need. A donation of \$10 may be used to obtain cleaning supplies for four families. A donation of \$25 can provide a whole month of meals for a family; \$50 can provide fresh fruits and vegetables for many people; \$100 might help a family with a dental or utility bill.
- Check out the **Presbyterian Catalog of Gifts** you can give in people's honor at [www.presbyteriangifts.org](http://www.presbyteriangifts.org)! Supply a south Asian farmer with reliable tools for only \$10; give a

South American family a set of five chickens for \$25; help a Sudanese village with a treadle pump for \$65; feed a Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer (our faith tradition's version of Peace Corps) for a month for \$100.



**CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**

**One True Light**  
This holy season, let the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem illuminate our hearts and shine in our actions by giving generously to the Christmas Joy Offering.

**Three Ways to Give**

- Through your congregation
- Text **JOY to 20222** to give \$10
- [presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy](http://presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy)



## Christmas Services

**THE CHRISTMAS SEASON** begins with Advent on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Each Sunday we will light candles for Hope, Peace, Joy & Love.

**ON CHRISTMAS EVE** we will have **TWO** worship services: 5 p.m. will appeal especially to children and the festive folks; with 6:30 p.m. for a more contemplative mood.

## New Member Class

Are you interested in joining the church as a formal member? In early 2014 we will have a series of New Member gatherings, from 9-9:45 on *three* Sunday mornings (date TBD). No tests or homework; this is simply to help us get to know each other, to learn about the history and ministry of NCPCC, and to think about what it means to be a Presbyterian Christian.

## Sunday Fellowship

If you can make coffee, set out some cookies, and fill a dishwasher, we need your help with Sunday Fellowship! The sign-up sheet is outside the kitchen.



## Hanging of the Greens Potluck

Lots of good food and great conversations at the December 1 potluck. Next potluck in January.





NEXT JUNE 14-21 in Detroit, leaders from all across our

Presbyterian Church (USA) will gather at our biannual General Assembly. Each presbytery sends a few pastors, elders and young adult advisors to make decisions about the future of the denomination. Delegate nomination forms are available at [www.plainsandpeaks.org/documents](http://www.plainsandpeaks.org/documents).

**Teaching About Christianity**

At Nederland Middle/High School on December 4<sup>th</sup>, Hansen will participate in *No Place For Hate's* Diversity Day, by teaching our area kids about Christianity. Then, he'll lead a program about faith for a number of Cub Scouts on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>. If you have youngsters at home, use this holiday season to talk to them about our distinct faith traditions, and how to be forthright and polite in a world of so many belief systems.

**NCPC ON FACEBOOK** – Have you liked us on Facebook? We are at 97 likes; you could put us over the century mark! If you have liked us, check your settings to make sure you get all our updates.

**COFFEE AT BUFFALO BILLS** — Every Tuesday morning at 9, a motley group of folks gather for coffee to discuss who we are as a church, what we are called to do next, and how to move toward it. Come, join the ongoing conversation!

**THE SESSION WILL MEET** Sunday, December 15, following fellowship after worship.

**THE ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING** will convene following the worship service on January 12.

**THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER deadline** is **Friday, December 27.**

**THE NEVER ENDING FOOD DRIVE**

keeps on keeping on because of your generous participation. It's "never ending" because poverty and hunger keep rolling along in this nation of ours. . . Hmm, time to rethink our systems?



December Anniversaries!	
24	Charlene & Gaylord Morrison
27	Martha Ann & Charles Hogrefe
31	Jaydene Morrison & Russ Peterson



The Human Services Resource Fair, that was held at the Nederland Community Center on Saturday, Nov 16, was a huge success. There were free flu shots provided by Dr Camarata and funded by the Nederland Food Pantry; free water well testing kits provided by Boulder County Public Health; Coupons for King Soopers provided by Catholic Charities; food bags provided by the Emergency Family Assistance Association; Mountain Family Health; low cost mental services provided by Peak to Peak Counseling; along with the involvement of several other agencies including other low cost Mental Health services and Boulder County Care Connect. In addition the Food Pantry was open as usual on Saturdays, and provided food to several households.

Coming in December, in addition to the Food Pantry's open hours on Thursday December 5th and every Saturday from 10-noon, will be the Christmas Food Basket and toy distribution on Saturday, December 14. We're always seeking volunteers, and can especially use added help for the Saturday, December 14

distribution of food baskets and toys from 9am-noon. **If you're able to help** you can contact me at [Dennis.W.Whalen@gmail.com](mailto:Dennis.W.Whalen@gmail.com).

There is one negative item to report. The food that has been provided by the Temporary Emergency Assistance Program (TEFAP), formerly USDA, has not been available for the past couple months due to some yet to be clarified legal requirements that Boulder County Community Food Share is addressing. Hopefully this issue will be resolved soon. Due to the flooding the number of households served by the Nederland Food Pantry has grown to nearly 300 households a month, and the need for food to distribute is critical.

Please remember our Never Ending Food Drive and, when you're able, bring non expired food items to the church for distribution. Also, remember you can also donate money by writing a check to the Nederland Food Pantry and placing it in to the collection plate.

— Dennis Whalen, Mission Elder  
Home 303.642.1435, Mobil 303.862.1501

**Youth Group**

**TEENAGERS GATHERED** for a number of fun events in November! The Highlands High School Retreat taught about our life as a journey with God. We partnered with St Andrew Presbyterian in Boulder for a mission project: to rake leaves and clean a basement for a 95 year old woman whose house flooded. Then we had a game night, where Hansen had no mercy. . .

For December we are gathering for lunch and conversation at the church on the 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:30, a School's-Out Lock-In at the church on the 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30, and Snow Day on the 31<sup>st</sup> at 9 am!

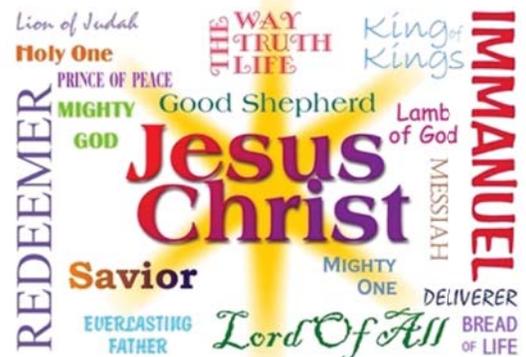
**.Wes Stiefer, II is in there somewhere**



*Violet Aandres; Judy Anderson; Becky Binge; Shirley Filer; Megen Stadele; Joye Stanich; Robyn Wysong; for those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis; and for those serving in the military.*

**Sermons Online**

When we launch the new website, links will make it will be very easy to listen to sermons online. Until then, you can find them at YouTube.com, by searching for "Hansen Wendlandt". By clicking on his name, you will be directed to Hansen's channel with dozens of videos and sermons.



## History of the Robe

IN SOME CHURCHES pastors wear incredibly ornate and distinctive robes, hats and jewelry. In other churches jeans and a collared shirt are almost too dressy. What's the difference, and why might clergy robes matter?

Catholicism made certain "vestments" mandatory in 1215, and the liturgically higher Protestant denominations (such as Episcopal and Lutheran) tend to follow that more formal attire, to go along with their more formal language and ritual, and theology that leans toward praise and order.

Some Methodist ministers wear an "alb", which looks simpler and even monastic, as befits their history of frontier preachers and a reliance on the inner workings of the spirit.

Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century Presbyterian ministers have been most likely to wear a "Geneva gown", following in the steps of John Calvin, who proudly preached and taught in his doctoral robe; there is something appropriate about that history too, since we demand more education from our clergy than any church in the world, and since Reformed worship and theology tends to be more intellectual.

Then, from about the 1950's, as America and its churches became more and more business-like, it became very common to find preachers of all denominations wearing business suits. And—no surprise—the sociological pendulum swung back, with many preachers these days working hard to keep up with the fashion trends of hipsters or cowboys or other niche communities.

Whatever style a minister might wear, the general purposes of a *robe* are to establish authority of the office, to remove any distraction about the person officiating, and thus to illumine the Word of God preached. The goal is dignity, reverence and to set the pastor's message apart from the everyday.

However, the meaning that is often inadvertently conveyed, is to set the pastor *above* everybody, and to sanctify his or her *words* even over the *Word* of God. Especially for people who are suspicious of assumed authority, might have been hurt by churches in the past, or

hesitate about the immediate relevance of God, robes can be barriers to faith.

The informality of my not normally wearing a gown will, no doubt, turn some people off. If it causes you liturgical scruples, I'm sorry. (Although if you understand the phrase "liturgical scruple", your spirituality is probably ingrained enough to find something else to appreciate on Sunday mornings...)

I do hope and believe, however, that my not normally wearing a gown can make myself, the Church and God's message more approachable for those people whose spiritual journey is at a different place. At baptisms, weddings, and funerals—namely when the ministerial office is called upon to enact more than declare—I am happy to add the robe. For preaching and participating in worship *with* you, I opt for the stole alone.

Next month we can tackle the language at the Lord's Supper!

— Hansen

WE KNOW the church website is missing right now. We're working to get the previous name—[nederlandcpc.org](http://nederlandcpc.org)—back. Very soon we hope to be launching a new site with a new host.

If you have any skill in web arts, talk to Gary Ennor or Hansen.



### December Birthdays!

- 8 Jay Belsan
- 10 Michael O'Neill
- 11 Wes Stiefer, II
- 16 Shane Kochen
- 17 Amy Hartman
- 21 Sally Rings
- 22 Claudia O'Neill
- 22 Joyce Trostle
- 26 Katie Haynes
- 30 Sue Evans
- 31 Jim Hubbard

# NCP C

**WHO ARE OUR CHURCH LEADERS** – We want to share with you who are some of our congregation's leaders, so you know how to ask questions or share feedback.

The *Session* is composed of elders who make decisions for the church. (*presbuteros* is Greek for "old wise dude", Hansen's translation.) Each elder oversees one ministry area.

- Christian Education: Barbara Hardt
- Fellowship: Janet Turnburke
- Financial: Vacant
- Mission: Dennis Whalen
- Property: Jim Hubbard
- Worship: Emily Haynes
- Session Clerk: Gary Ennor

The *Deacons* care for people in many ways. (*diakonos* is Greek for "waiter", or more generally "servant", or more technically a specific position of service in the early church.)

- Pat Ennor and Bette Ventrella

The *Pastoral Relations Committee* helps advise and support Hansen. They are akin to his personnel committee, which will occasionally seek congregational comments.

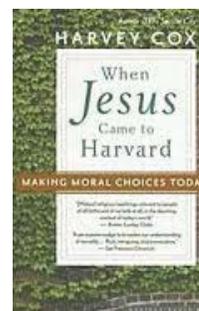
- Kate Crain, Michael O'Neill and Wes Stiefer

Wes Stiefer also serves the church as its treasurer; monitoring the church's income and expenses with regular monthly reporting to the Session.

In the absence of a church member serving as the financial elder, Wes has also been serving the Session by attending its regular monthly meetings.

The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the ordinary.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



### Book Study

The book club has been going strong with *When Jesus Came to Harvard*, by Harvey Cox. We meet each Tuesday at church for soup, bread and vigorous discussion!

You can still join in, and we're always looking for folks to sign up to provide the soup!