

The Bell Tower

October 2014

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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



Youth Mission Trip

Over Labor Day weekend, along with our partner Youth Group from Westminster Presbyterian (Pueblo), Mark Haynes and Hansen brought six youth down to Lake City, to offer their little mountain town some hard work and Christian love.

We made some improvements on their church building, helped prepare for a large fundraising yard sale, did some trail maintenance, led a skit in worship, and had plenty of time to build friendships while having fun.



Men's Group

On 27 September the Men's Group met at Rich and Violet's house to cut down some rogue trees. Nothing says faith and fellowship like the whirr of a chainsaw and sawdust in your hair!

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Thanks to all of you who submitted articles and photos. It makes a *HUGE* difference!
November Newsletter deadline — October 27

You may have heard Katie Haynes talk about this outreach in worship on 7 Sept. (Or, listen to the sermon, "Model of Service - Nuns", www.youtube.com/watch?v=5evsOIvsgqY.) Here are a few words from our 6th graders:

Allison Hardt-Zeman – *"I liked working on the church and watching the play in church. I also liked going to the creek and swimming!"*

Anastasia Blinebry – *"I liked making the trail up at the ski resort, and helping the people set up the yard sale. I had a wonderful time and would be happy to go next year."*

Mission Team

The Food Pantry is in the final process of completing the development of a web page. Our goal is to have this ready for public access by the first of October. It will include current information about the Food Pantry, the history of the Nederland Food Pantry, and provide an option for people to donate to the Food Pantry. It's being developed by a small group of people with extensive experience developing web sites who are donating their time and talents thanks to Margaret May and our Treasurer, Scott Tirapelli.

Now that we've had one years experience with our Volunteer Handbook, it's being revised to make it simpler and, thus, help assure volunteers will actually read the entire handbook, which originally contained history and other more general information that will be moved to another location.

This is important because of the expectations and requirements we have of our volunteers. They must be totally aware of these 'rules' so that we don't violate requirement imposed upon the Food Pantry from Community Food Share and some grants.

Because I have participated with the Food Pantry, and the Food Pantry's *Continued Page 3*

Compassion

Words are tricky.

The New Testament uses four words that English sometimes translates simply as "love". For instance, Jesus often talks about *agape*, the Christianized virtue of unconditional love that we should have for each other, because God has it for us. And many of us are familiar with *philia*, a love of things, such as philosophy (the love of wisdom, *sophia*) or the philharmonic (the lovers of good music). Of course there is *eros*, for romantic or erotic love. And once in a while we run into *storge*, the love natural to kinship or family. (Hence, Philadelphia probably should have been named *Storgadelphia*, but then what would we have called their baseball team?)

Greek speakers in those days could not have possibly mixed up those words, but we do it all the time. One of the coolest places in Scripture where English equivocates these different sensibilities is John 21:15-17. You'll see the word "love" about six times in your Bible, but in the Greek, Jesus asks twice, "Do you *agape* me?" And Peter answers, "Of course I *philia* you." Finally Jesus settles for, "So, you *philia* me?" Anyone who has gone through that conversation knows how sharp such language can feel.

At various times English speakers have tried out new words for *agape*, such as 'charity' or 'loving-kindness'. But these days, when talking about its deepest sense, Christians tend to just repeat 'love', over and over, sacrificing precision for some attempt at profundity—until, for some, the word has become dull and uninspiring.

So much about Christianity is changing these days, as radically as any shifts since the 1500's. Traditional churches are shrinking, while many folks are gathering to worship and engage religion in new ways. People are reimagining and challenging how to read *Continued Page 3*

MOVING FROM THE BEACHES OF FLORIDA in 2012, we arrived in Nederland with four biological sons. Life seemed complete. A small voice kept stirring in our hearts though, one that said, “you’ve parented for a long time, and you care, maybe you ought to keep going.” Our story went like this:

June 2013 saw us doing some heavy research into adoption. Are we qualified? Too old? Can we afford this? How will it affect our boys? Are we nuts? We went to adoption orientations to learn more in Boulder County and the Adoption Exchange in Aurora. In July we spent a couple of Saturdays completing 24 hours of “core training” and by August we had decided to use NightLight Christian Adoptions to be our representatives and conduct our mandatory home study.

By now we had searched through many children on the websites www.adoptuskids.org, www.heartgalleryco.org, and www.adoptex.org. One little girl, rather demure and soft-spoken, had a video telling all who watched that what she wanted was “a mom and a dad.” Her caseworkers told us she had been in various homes in foster care for almost five years, they could not “hold” her for us, and until our home study was completed they really couldn’t consider us. I’m quite sure I watched Angel’s video 100 times, and when we started our

home study we paid extra to expedite it. We were maniacs getting fingerprinted, filling out forms, scheduling interviews and preparing our home, but six weeks later it was all complete and we were certified for fostering (in Colorado you must foster a child for six months before you are eligible to ask to adopt.)



The Crain Family — Sterling, Courtland, Kate, Bruce, Livingston, Sebastian and Angel

A month after being certified and constantly bugging her caseworkers ever-so-sweetly (squeaky wheel!) we finally had our “presentation” in October which is a meeting with all her caseworkers, her foster parents, her attorney, us and the file of her life. Angel still didn’t know about us, as we had to commit to her before they would introduce us. We were required to “sleep on it” and in the morning we told them what we had known in our hearts all along... YES!

One chilly day in Rocky Ford, Angel’s caseworkers went to her school with a photo album I had made of our family, home, community, church and pets. They called her out of class and to a room where they told her there is a family that wants to adopt her, and presented her with the album. The next day, Nov. 8, 2013, Bruce and I drove to the Pueblo Library with a bag of things to do and a stuffed wolf (we were told she loves wolves) to meet this shy little girl and her caseworkers. An eleven-year-old has some say in her life, and she decided we were worth a try!

Weeks were filled with long hours on the road to Rocky Ford, almost 4 hours. I often drove there in the morning, had lunch in the cafeteria with her, hung out in a coffee shop until after school when I’d pick her up and help her with homework in the public library. We’d eat dinner and she’d be back at her foster home by 6:00, then I’d start the drive back to Nederland. Bruce and I spent weekends in Pueblo and Rocky Ford, spending time with her and having overnights. Thanksgiving she was allowed to be with us for the long break and really got to know the boys, and finally on December 19, 2013, she moved in with us! Six months later we petitioned the court for an adoption hearing for our now 12-year-old daughter, and on August 25, 2014, we officially became one family!

Worship & Music

Thanks for everyone’s response to the Music Survey! The Worship Team reviewed all the information you shared, and made a few decisions you might like to know about.

- 1) The Choir now will sing about two times a month, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. They will practice still each week at 9 am, but we will try to get more guest musicians to play or sing in worship, especially our budding young fiddle stars Allison and Anastasia! If you are willing to lead an anthem or collaborate with other musicians, please talk to Emily or Hansen!
- 2) Folks like a variety of music, but especially appreciate singing upbeat and familiar songs. Now that Hansen knows more of which hymns are familiar (and you can keep telling him which ones you like!), we’ll work in more of those.
- 3) People love the Blessing of the Animals service. So, expect one next year, perhaps in conjunction with the Outdoor Worship.
- 4) Christmas-time is perfect for involving young folks in worship. So, Hansen will work with the youth and kids to help plan their involvement in the Advent and Christmas Eve

Through this process you, our church family, were with us. There were times of anxiety and frustration, and also of joy and peace. There were tears and smiles and always someone from Nederland Community Presbyterian Church to hold us and listen. You shared stories of your personal adoptions and reminded us that we have the same Father caring for us all. There were stories of inspiration and we knew that our prayers were also on your lips. For all of that and more, we can’t thank you enough. Thank you for being a part of our lives forever. — *Kate Crain*

See page 4: [Food for Thought](#) – more on adoption and some of the costs (more than \$) to us as a society for not assuring that all our children have loving homes and guidance. Perhaps an area where we may grow into compassion and understanding as a people? – Ed.

Fellowship



Thank you to all who have served with Fellowship throughout the summer - your contribution to NCPC’s fellowship time is important to the life of the church and is very much appreciated.

As we move into Fall, new schedules will

continue to be posted on the board just outside of the kitchen door. Please see if there is a time that works for you to sign up and serve.

If you have a special event and would like to celebrate or honor that event at Fellowship feel free to let me know in advance and I am happy to save that date for you. For example - the Crains recently celebrated the finalization of Angel’s

adoption and shared it with the church family at Sunday Fellowship.

Birthdays, anniversaries, births, engagements are all fun to celebrate with the church family!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Claudia
claudiaone@wispertel.net
 303-258-3447

Financial Update

At the end of August, 2014, our annual budget for the year projected income from pledged and non-pledged giving to be \$50,917 with projected expenses of \$68,842.

However, with two-thirds of the year behind us at the end of August, the income was \$42,704 (\$8,213 less than budgeted) and the year-to-date expenses were \$66,432 (\$2,410 less than budgeted).

This means the church spent \$23,728 (negative cashflow) from its savings rather than the \$17,925 that was projected. This is \$5,803 more than forecasted in the budget.

Thus, expenses have been less than expected and proportionately, giving has been a good deal less than expected.

Coffee and Conversation

Every Thursday, 9 am, at *The Train Cars* back room, everyone is invited for coffee and conversation about life, faith, church and everything in between.

Women's Group meets the first Sunday of each month at 4 pm. All women are welcome, whether you want to share a margarita or just some laughs with new church friends! This month, 5 October at Wild Mountain.

Youth Group

The 2014-2015 Youth Group calendar of events is now published on our website! Check it out at www.nederlandcpc.org/youth-group.

Starting in October, on the 1st Sunday of each month, High Schoolers meet after church, with lunch; and Middle Schoolers come at 1 pm, with a snack. On each 3rd Thursday at 7 pm, the whole group gathers, with dessert; and on the 5th Sunday after church, we'll all get together with lunch.

Friends are always welcome, and most meetings happen at the church, for about 90 minutes.

For the upcoming 5 October event, however, we will be working at the Food Pantry. Wear something you can get dirty, because we will be harvesting potatoes and planting the winter garden. And middle schoolers, come directly to the Community Center that afternoon.

Compassion

Continued from Page 1

the Bible and what God means for their lives together. And new types of spiritual practice are enriching faith journeys. Perhaps it is time to lean on another word to express the core Christian virtue of *agape*.

'Caring' has a simplicity to it, though maybe a saccharine quality as well. 'Devotion' carries some weight, but seems a bit pointed to capture all that Jesus meant. 'Empathy' and 'sympathy' have their place, especially when talking about *agape* toward individuals; however, Jesus seems to have a wider sense of what we are called to do for the whole world. 'Mindfulness' is popular these days, at least in Boulder and Berkeley; yet, it takes a little work for some, to connect the concept of one's own mind to what love demands outside of one's self.

How about 'compassion'? In my own theology, compassion has tended to be a category or type of love, alongside service and justice. There is a *way* we treat people, a *response* to situations of need, and a *commitment* to change systems that hurt people. But what if 'c o m p a s s i o n' could envelop all three? Can it be an attitude, an action, an allegiance to progress, and insofar as those, also a central virtue to Christian faith? I could be convinced. How does it sound to you?

In next month's newsletter, we will learn more about compassion, as part of Karen Armstrong's movement, *Charter for Compassion*. — Hansen

Mission Team

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significant help in providing food when the Community Center was utilized as a shelter, I was asked to become an initial member of the Nederland Emergency Preparedness Action Committee. This was established by a resolution of the Nederland Board of Trustees at their meeting on Sept 2. I've agreed to participate in this volunteer opportunity to help assure that the greater Nederland community is prepared for whatever disasters arise in the future.

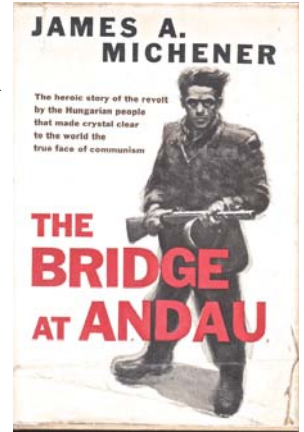
— Dennis Whalen, *Mission Elder*

Book Club

The next read for the Book Club is *The Bridge at Andau*, by James Michener. This is the story of an otherwise insignificant bridge, which became a centerpiece in the Hungarian Revolution.

While this is a non-fiction, non-theological book, be sure that the conversation will find its way to topics religious and existential!

Join the group on Tuesday nights at 6:30, starting on 7 Oct. We have great conversation and usually a nice after-dinner snack.



October Birthdays!

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 14 Bob Rhoads | 19 Jeremy Thomlinson |
| 15 Kevin Kozel | 20 Gwen Burak |
| 15 Alexandra Mills | 22 Dan Burak |
| 18 Jack Filer | 27 John Stinton |

Missing your birthday? Tell Gary.



Violet Aandres and Rich Deubel; Judy Anderson; Dave Felkley; Atashnaa Medicine Shield; Karen Moss; Rhonda Skeie and her brother Steve Holland; Gail and David Skinner; Megan Stadele and her parents; Joye Stanich; Jerry and Margaret Ward; Pam White; love and consideration within the church and denomination; for those who are unable to worship with us regularly; for those serving in the military; Isaiah and other foster children waiting for a family.

Men's Group (continued) usually meets the third Sunday at 4 pm, but this month we need to reschedule to 26 October, at Very Nice Brewing. All men are welcome, whether you want to share a beer or help plan our next outreach project.

Peak to Peak Housing and Human Services Task Force

The Peak to Peak Housing and Human Services Task Force has been meeting monthly for the past year, focusing on the needs of the greater Peak to Peak community. It is part of the larger Inter Mountain Alliance (IMA), which is a group of civic and community leaders from across the Peak to Peak region that seeks to address both the ongoing and disaster preparedness needs of the mountain communities.

The Housing and Human Services Task Force consists of members from the Mental Health community, Nederland Area Seniors, Via, Boulder County Area Agency on Aging, the Nederland and Allenspark Food Pantries, Canyon Cares, the Nederland Teen Center, United Way, Nederland Clothing Closet, Nederland Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee, Nederland Community Presbyterian Church, and others.

Among other accomplishments, this group has identified funding for the Climb bus that travels from Allenspark to Rollinsville, and prepared and found

Peacemaking Offering

On 5 October, we will collect one of our three annual special offerings. In conjunction with *World Communion Sunday* (an 80 year-old tradition for many denominations that promotes global Christian unity and ecumenical cooperation), the PC(USA)

Food for Thought

In 2012, 23,396 youth *aged out* of the US foster care system (exited foster care to a non-family setting) without the emotional and financial support necessary to succeed. Nearly 40% had been homeless or couch surfed, nearly 60% of young men had been convicted of a crime, and only 48% were employed. 75% of women and 33% of men receive government benefits to meet basic needs. 50% of all youth who aged out were involved in substance use and 17% of the females were pregnant. Source: AFCARS Report, No. 20, Jim Casey Youth

It costs The Adoption Exchange an average of \$1800 to provide basic recruitment services aimed at connecting each of the children it serves with a permanent family.

funding to publish the *“Where to Get Help Guide”*.

Several issues of the Peak to Peak community currently being addressed include improving transportation options to have more availability and to support school students who would like to participate in after school activities but currently lack options to get transported home other than the school bus.

The task force is arranging and supporting the Health and Human Services Fair that will be on November 14, 2014. In addition to food baskets, this will include representatives from multiple Nederland, Boulder county and other agencies that can assist people in locating housing, signing up for various opportunities to get funding for child care and other such needs, or getting flu shots.

When possible, I'll provide updates about the activities of this Task Force, and about the activities of the Inter Mountain Alliance.

— Dennis Whalen, *Mission Team*

collects a *Peace and Global Witness Offering*.

Half of this offering is directed to one of the national church's international peacemaking initiatives, and the other half goes toward our own local efforts to make Nederland a more peaceful community.

Please consider contributing to this offering.

In contrast, it will cost taxpayers and communities an estimated \$300,000 in social costs (e.g., incarceration, public assistance, and lost wages) over the lifetime of every youth who emancipates from the foster care system. Source: Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative 2013

In Colorado, approximately 4,923 children are in foster care; over 276 of these children are available for adoption and wait for families.

“People ask me. ‘What about gay adoptions? Interracial? Single Parent?’ I say. ‘Hey fine, as long as it works for the child and the family is responsible.’ My big stand is this: Every child deserves a home and love. Period.”

— Dave Thomas, founder
Wendy's Wonderful Kids

In Colorado, more than 500 children

PEAK TO PEAK COUNSELING is offering three support groups this fall.

- Gail is leading *Nourish*, a 6-week group on body image.
- Alex is leading *Emptying the Cup*, an 8-week course on mindfulness in everyday life.
- Diana is leading a 7-week study on *Enhancing Relationship Through Authentic Communication*.

Check out www.peaktopeakcounseling.com for full information.

Fall Cleanup and Fixup

On Saturday, September 20, a group gathered to cleanup/fixup our church and the area around it. The front steps were fixed, grasses cut, trees and bushes trimmed, sanctuary lights cleaned and bulbs replaced, playground fence repaired and some painting completed.

A big THANK YOU to all who pitched in to help. This is one way we can contribute to keep our little church looking nice and help reduce the budget deficit.

— Jim Hubbard, *Facility Elder*

PS: There is still time and a couple of slots are still open if you would like to adopt a small section of the yard and garden to maintain on a continual basis. Let me know if you would be interested.



“age out” of the system annually without a permanent connection.

As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.

—Audrey Hepburn

There are SO many ways you can help in a manner that fits you and your family. From adoption to respite care, mentoring to donating items for school backpacks or Christmas stockings. I'd be happy to talk and help explore ways you can be a part of the solution for these kiddos. Call or email me. katecrain@me.com (321) 720-6732

Remember:

