

The Bell Tower

December 2014

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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



Advent & Christmas Plans

The Sunday after Thanksgiving tends to welcome Christmas preparations, and in worship we start a new series, based on the traditional Advent values of Joy, Love, Peace & Hope. Each week *Be a Candle* will use handmade candles (thanks to Sue Churches) and touching poetry (thanks to Amy Hartman) to draw us closer to God's arrival in our lives. Look forward to seeing the light of Christ shining into your lives, through the eyes of John the Baptist, Simeon, Joseph, Mary, and each other!

Star of Bethlehem

December 14 following fellowship

You've always heard about this star. Is it magic? Is it mythical? Could it be a real astronomical event? Come after worship to watch a stunning video that explains just what is going on in this Biblical story. (Folks who watched this last year were stunned. It was "awesome" and "scary". Carve an hour to shake yourself up!)

Daniel Herman Christmas CD!!!

On Sale all month! This is going to be your best stocking stuffer of the season — and it was recorded in the NCPC sanctuary.

Congregational Meetings

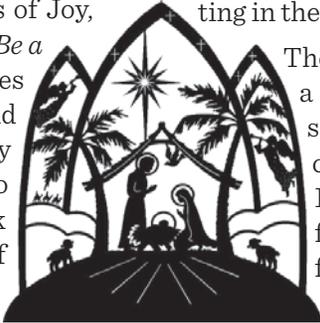
The Presbyterian Church likes to conduct its business "decently and in order". So, we have a couple official congregational meetings coming up. Official members can vote, and anyone is welcome to attend and speak.

First, on 14 December we will meet shortly after worship to vote on the Session's recommendation to install Wes Stiefer as Clerk, for the remainder of 2014. (Yes, that's 2014, not a typo. We need a clerk to sign a bunch of records, so we're asking Wes to serve for a couple weeks.)

Next, on 11 January we will gather for our Annual Meeting, to vote on all the new Elders and Deacons, to approve Hansen's compensation package, and to offer any comments on the overall 2015 budget.

Christmas Eve - 2014

As with last year, we will have two services. The first, at 5 pm will be a family friendly service, with children participating in the story of Jesus' birth.



Then, at 6:30 we will enjoy a more contemplative service ending with candlelight and song. In between will be a fellowship time, with family and friends sharing holiday goodies.

Christmas Eve Giving

An offering will be collected at both Christmas Eve services for the Deacon's Fund of our church. These funds will be used throughout 2015 to support needs in our local community.

During 2014 the funds from Christmas Eve services last year helped our local neighbors with a variety needs including food, health care, car repairs, rent payments, electricity and fuel bills, warm clothing and baby supplies.

Your Christmas donations go a long way to lend a hand. Thank you!

Doing Compassion Locally and Globally

The last couple months in the Bell Tower, I've used this space to talk about Compassion, and Karen Armstrong's *Charter for Compassion*. In January we will vote whether this congregation signs on with the principles of that document. (Read about it at charterforcompassion.org) For now, let's envision what it would mean for us, as a church family, to live with more compassion...

Locally, perhaps we can empower the Deacons to do more for people in need. We can encourage the town and partner with other organizations to do more for those who experience homelessness and poverty, especially as the winter weather moves in. We can always be welcoming to people who visit worship seeking some community and connection with God. We can share kindness with people in our town, even when contentious issues arise, as they are wont to do. We can forgive more, and be less judgmental of the different lifestyles around us. And we can learn from each other, what practices of compassion move our hearts and minds.

Or, globally, did you see Hansen's article in the Mountain Ear? NCPC is joining with a few local organizations to address world hunger. *Stop Hunger Now* is an organization that has delivered 175,000,000 meals to hungry children around the world. We are inviting them to bring rice, dried veggies, vitamins and protein; then we run a sort of assembly line, packing them to be dispersed to families and schools. It's a fun community event, involving all ages, and how else can you do hands-on international mission without getting on an airplane? We need your compassionate action in two ways. First, when we invite Stop Hunger Now up here in 2015 (date TBD), we need you to come help pack **10,000** meals. Stop by for 30 or 60 minutes, learn about the lives of the people who will receive this food,

Continued page 2, Column 3

Holiday Mountain Market

ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL

Saturday, December 6, 2014 10am - 5pm
Sunday, December 7, 2014 10am - 4pm

Nederland Community Center
750 Hwy 72 - 1/2 mile north of the Traffic Circle

Local Mountain Artists & Crafters

Unique Gifts
Silent Auction
Festive Hot Food
50/50 Cash Split Raffle
Live Music & Dance Performances
Photos With Santa 12:00-3:00

For information call 303-258-0799



Stop by after worship, to pick up some local gifts and hear the youth and choir sing carols!

WOMEN'S GROUP meets the first Sunday of each month at 4 pm. All women are welcome, whether you want to share a drink or just some laughs with new church friends! This month, 7 December, is at Sundance café.

MEN'S GROUP usually meets the third Sunday at 4 pm, but with the Christmas season upon, this month we need to reschedule to 14 December, at Very Nice Brewing. All men are welcome, whether you want to share a beer or help plan our next outreach project.

Youth Group

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

7 December 11:30 – All Youth, singing Carols at the Ned Mountain Market!

18 December 7 pm – All Youth, getting ready for their leadership in worship

4 January 11:30 – High Schoolers, with lunch!

4 January 1 pm – Middle Scholers, with a snack!

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.

THE HANGING OF THE GREENS...

last Sunday wouldn't have been hanging without the work of the Haynes family and a few others. Thanks for getting the job done!



December Anniversaries!

24 Charlene & Gaylord Morrison

27 Martha Ann & Charles Hogrefe



December Birthdays!

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

Missing your birthday? Tell Gary.

Rocky Mountain Mission

This summer we hosted a group of teenagers from Oklahoma and Texas, and arranged for them to give four days of service to our community. In an effort to expand that program, and welcome *three* groups next summer, we've sent information and invitations to all the Presbyterian church bodies from Washington to Texas. Pastors in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and even West Virginia, have been getting the word out, sending our web page to their friends (nederlandcpc.org/rocky-mountain-mission). If God wills it, Nederland will become a prime destination for young people to grow in faith, and our church will be blessed with an eager spirit of outreach!

Mission Report

An electronic database of the clients of the food pantry has been developed by one of our volunteers. This data will be kept up-to-date with visits and provide quick and ready information on the number of client visits which seems to be nearly always needed for grant applications, and for simply answering questions for other agencies that visit the Food Pantry.

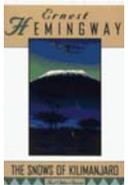
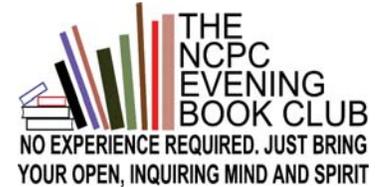
In addition it will help us identify clients that normally visit the Food Pantry but have been absent in the more recent weeks so we can follow up to verify that they're OK, or to possibly deliver some food to them if they're in need and unable to make it to the Food Pantry for some reason. The Food Pantry is gathering extra food and toys in preparation for distribution of the food baskets on December 13. On the afternoon of December 12 we'll be preparing the boxes with the non-perishable food items and early on the 13th we'll add the perishable items. Of course anyone able to help is welcome and encouraged to join in the effort. The Food Pantry's web site is now available at NederlandFoodPantry.org. Those of us that work with the Food Pantry are very pleased and excited about this beautifully designed web site, and thankful for the donated efforts by several people who were able to get this task completed. Please check it out.

Doing Compassion Locally and Globally continued and help prepare some of these many meals. Second, each meal costs 29 cents, so we're in the fundraising stage now. You'll notice that our Christmas tree has some new ornaments. You can purchase



a green ball for \$10, blue for \$25, or red for \$100. Those funds will go completely toward food for children in extreme poverty, and you get to take the ornament home, so that on Christmas morning, surrounded by wrapping paper, you can know how you helped your global neighbors. Pick up an ornament at church throughout Advent, or at the Holiday Mountain Market on 7 December.

In whatever ways of justice, righteousness and kindness that inspire you, may you find room for more compassion in your life.



THE CURRENT READ FOR THE BOOK CLUB is *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, by Ernest Hemingway. Join us on this adventure story, where conflict and self-serving attitudes get in the way of ever summiting the "House of God". We start on 18 November, and continue each Tuesday at 6:30. We have great conversation and usually a nice after-dinner snack.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Violet Aandres and Rich Deubel; Judy Anderson; Karen Moss; Miles Pancoast and family; Rhonda Skeie and her brother Steve Holland; Bob Kochen; Atashnaa Medicine Shield; Gail and David Skinner; 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; for all those caring for aging parents; and for those struggling with the problems at issue in Ferguson, Missouri.

Advent Candles Many thanks to Sue Churches for this year's advent candles – molded from beeswax from her own bee colonies – check it out when you have a moment.

