

The Bell Tower

November 2015

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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



NCPC . . . a Charter for Compassion Partner

Congratulations to Pete Morgan and Heidi LaCosse Morgan, who got married this month in Black Hawk! Joey was the ring-bearer, the scene was beautiful with horses behind the couple and a snowy backdrop in the distance; and for the first time, perhaps, in the history of weddings, it concluded with a ceremonial throwing of a chicken. (You'll have to ask them about that one...)

Congratulations to Liam Wells, the newest child of God baptized into the Church! He is the son of Morgan & Amy Dawidowski Wells, younger brother of Hunter. Thank you all, for pledging to nurture and support this young man and the happy family!



Last month we also celebrated the baptism of Odin Duggan, son of Timmy and Loren Tillotson Duggan. The congregation blessed the family, and then we went to the woods of Eldora for the actual baptism.



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Stop Hunger Now

Stop Hunger Now has announced that the 10,000 meals from our packaging event on 5 August have been shipped!!! Over 285,000 meals were sent from Kansas City to their partner in South Sudan, Salesian Missions.



Thank you to everyone who donated and helped work at Nederland's first packing session! You can help us get ready for 11,000 meals next year, by donating to NCPC. At only 35 cents per meal, it takes a little change, to make a lot of difference!

The Salesians of Don Bosco have been working in the region of South Sudan since 1982, providing marginalized youth in Juba, Maridi, Tonj, and Wau with educational opportunities, housing, food, youth centers, parishes, health services and other needs.

An educational program in Tonj, which consists of a primary school for 1,200 students and additional educational centers in the villages, seeks to make education more easily accessible to children.

Another essential service in Tonj is a Salesian run health center which cares for approximately 250 patients every day, and is the only medical facility available within 125 miles.

At Don Bosco Vocational Training Center in Wau, the Salesians train youth in general mechanics, carpentry and plumbing in addition to promoting agricultural projects essential to the town.

Feeding the children is an integral

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The Pope - Good News, and Bad News

It was big news when the Pope came to America recently. He was the first Pope to ever speak to Congress, although next time, maybe he should take confession with that group... He also visited prisoners, held lots of parades, and blessed a *lot* of babies. Generally, it was an inspirational, powerful visit, for Catholics, for other people of faith, and even for people who don't believe in God but sure appreciate this man of God.

The most controversial moment of the trip was certainly when the news broke that Francis held a private audience with Kim Davis, the Kentucky clerk who went to prison rather than signing marriage licenses for gay couples. Some people who heard this were indignant: "I thought he was progressive!" Others were pleased with the symbolism of that action, although it is doubtful whether they would ever really be fans of this Pope.

Many of my Facebook friends—in the church and well distant from it—responded with such disappointment. Some were truly angry, others resigned to his fall from adulation, as though it was merely a matter of time until he would prove that nothing changes.

More importantly, what they really meant, I believe, was something like this: "the Good News that we've heard from and about the Pope was just about the last chance for me to ever regain trust in the church, and this Bad News puts me right back into the camp of apathetic agnostics." I don't think I exaggerate to say that when people heard about the Pope's private reception with Kim Davis, thousands, probably tens of thousands, of people who were finally and slowly warming to the possibility of God in their lives, quickly cooled off. The bubble had popped.

Except... within days we learned that Davis did *not* have a private audience,

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The Pope... Continued

but that she was merely one of many people who shuffled through. (Her publicist deeply misled the media.) And then, we discovered that the only people who the Pope actually did grant a private audience, on the entire trip, were a gay couple the day before. (His publicist never intended to turn that into a public statement.) Finally, we heard that it was such a surprise to have Davis come through the line, that Francis was considering whether to fire the Vatican official who set it up, and set him up. (There is no word yet on that final decision.)

So, did my friends jump back on the bandwagon? Did they remember all the humility and graceful power that Francis had shown over these two years, and come back to the possibility of trusting the church or regaining faith in God? Did they confess to being duped by the fickle ways of the world, and pledge even more support to this stable exemplar of love? Nope. Judging by my Facebook feed, it seems that most people never even heard the truth of the matter.

I have two main reactions to this whole fiasco. For the first, I'm sure I'm not alone. Why is Bad News so much more immediately powerful than Good News, literally, 'God's spiel', the *gospel*? Why do we so expect our most beloved figures to fail? The fact that "those" magazines are

still prominent at grocery store aisles tells a pathetic story about who we are, and what we want to believe. So how do we, individually and societally, move from the tabloids to the gospel?

My second reaction, I admit, is bizarre. A part of me—a small part of me—honestly wished that the initial rumor was true. Of course the whole of me is glad that it wasn't, but this tiny part of me thinks that it would have been valuable to see a more complicated expression of faith. The gospel does not fall along American political lines, and most of us would even accept that our own moral feelings are less consistent than God's. So why can't a person of faith, or a high model of faith, achieve different motivations, maybe higher motivations than the religio-moral branding that so often determines the course of our actions? We respect Jesus for bypassing the debates of his time, by finding new way to express love. Wouldn't it be great if the Pope had taught us again that radical grace trumps ideological fervor? (pun definitely intended)

Alas, it wasn't true, and so we have to go back on his many other examples of surprising the world by following Jesus, and following Jesus by surprising the world. May we find that same sort of courage, to draw ourselves closer to the Good News. — Hansen

Stop Hunger Now Continued

part of the Salesian programs in South Sudan, because a satisfied stomach is a prerequisite for other learning and development activities. Learn more about Salesian Missions (www.salesianmissions.org) or Stop Hunger Now (www.stophungernow.com).

In our Prayers

Please keep the folks and circumstances noted below in your daily thoughts and prayers.



Violet Aandres and Rich Deubel; Judy Anderson; Cinda's brother, Bob; Delores Cieloha; Rev Gibney's brother; Mike Haynes, Mark's dad; the family of Dale Heber; Janet Irwin; Linda Jones; Kaitlyn Lammers; Chuck Miller; Anastasia and family; Karen Moss; Morggan O'Neill; Miles Pancoast and family; Rhonda Skeie; Gail and David Skinner; Mike Smith; David Starr; Keri Stiller, Pat Whalen; love and consideration within the church and denomination; and for those serving in the military.



New Directory

Many folks in our church family been photographed for the new directory! We are now in the process of proofing the contact information you want printed.

Watch for an e-mail from church, and the sooner you let us know that everything is correct and how you want it, the sooner we'll be able to publish, and the better it will be for us to build relationships and community!



It's that time of year again — consider pledging generously of your time, talents and treasure in the coming year. You, your church and your community will benefit.

And, when requested, please return your pledge promptly. It will help your church leaders plan the budget for 2016.



Like Us on Facebook



And if you already do like us, go to our church page, and hover/click on the "Liked" button (upper right, just below the picture of our bridge). If you see a choice for "Follow", tap that, so you can see our updates in your feed. If you see a choice or Default or See First, you're already following us, so thanks!

Men's Group meets the third Sunday of each month at 4 p.m. All men are welcome, whether you want to share a beer or just enjoy each other's company. This month it's 15 November at Salto.

And this month, we have *two mission projects* you can help with! Talk to Hansen, **if you can swing a hammer**, to help out a couple of local families in need.



November Birthdays

5	Charlene Morrison	24	Floy Walberg
5	Debbie Stevens	25	Dan Harrison
6	Dave Blanchard	25	Janice Rundle
9	Hayden Hardt-Zeman	26	Eleanor Busch
10	Russ Peterson	27	Pat Ennor
11	Kathleen Henningsen	30	Charlie Allen
17	Cinda Kochen	30	Mark Haynes

Mission Report

— Dennis Whalen

The Nederland Food Pantry has received the second of the two parts of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) grant from United Way. This money allows the Food Pantry to purchase various items for our clients that are not available from the Boulder County Community Food Share such as cleaning supplies, toiletries, and high protein food.

The Food Pantry has completed the purchase of a Van for transporting food from Boulder County Community Food Share (for \$253.00). Insurance issues have been resolved and it is now registered, and very nicely labeled thanks to donated work. (See photos below). This van may be driven by any one approved by the Food Pantry Board if their drivers license and proof of their auto insurance is on file with the food pantry.



The yearly Nederland Community Health Fair will be on Saturday, Nov 14. EFFA will provide food boxes and have people available to provide case management. In addition there will be free flu shots available thanks to another donation, and several other health related organizations.

Holiday food boxes and toys will be distributed on December 12.

The Food Pantry and Clothing Closet will be working jointly with the Nederland PTA to help children and families get the assistance they need, including Winter gear.

New Member Interest Group

Have you ever considered formally joining the congregation? A handful of people gathered on 25 Oct to talk about their faith journey and meet other folks who are newer to NCPC. We gather again on 8 Nov to learn about this congregation, where it came from, and where you can help it go. The final meeting for anyone who wants to declare their faith through official membership, is 15 Nov.

Homework Help

The details have been ironed out, and we are starting our new outreach, to Nederland children who need a little help and guidance!

A few volunteers gather each Thursday at the Elementary School for some after-school support. We reach out especially to 4th graders to begin, but any child is welcome.

If you have taught younger children, or worked with kids before, and have time to commit an hour and a half each week, please talk to Hansen or Nancy Waldron.

Imagine how your own childhood could have felt, with one more caring adult on your side. Now imagine how the children of our town could benefit—and their parents, and the teachers, and the whole community, and your own spirit—from you being that one more caring adult...

Coffee and Conversation

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

Youth Group

We live in a diverse world, and young people could use help understanding some of those differences, especially with regard to faith. At the very least, some inter-religious dialogue can help them become better citizens; and more so, it can help them reflect on what the world means and how they want to engage it spiritually.

NCPC started in October sponsoring a program for teens and pre-teens to learn about various religious traditions. One Sunday a month *all young people in town* are invited to interact with local folks who associate with other religions. (We could invite some Boulder faith leaders, but the priority is for our young folks to see and better understand their neighbors.) We have food and games and stories to make it engaging and educational. Any volunteers to help manage this fun?

Also, one Wednesday a month, our own Youth Group—with any visitors welcome—are invited to come figure out what makes their Christian heritage unique and meaningful.

The next gatherings are 18 Nov 6:30 (Why do mission in the church?), 1 Nov 11:45 (Wicca), and 6 Dec 11:45 (Judaism).

November Anniversary

13 Bob and Cinda Kochen



Next Time....when someone's absent, speak as if they were present, it will make life a whole lot better — yours and theirs!

Do you have questions or comments about NCPC?

In the Presbyterian denomination, the ministry of administration for each congregation is handled by its Session of Elders (like a spiritual Board of Trustees), and the ministry of compassion is directed by the Deacons.

Here are your church leaders and staff:

Clerk of Session, Nancy Lynd

Elder for Finance, Marylou Harrison

Elder for Worship, Emily Haynes

Elder for Fellowship, Claudia O'Neill

Elder for Property, Jim Reis

Elder for Mission, Dennis Whalen

Deacon, David Ford

Deacon, Katie Haynes

Deacon, Kathleen Henningsen

Deacon, Bette Ventrella

Treasurer, Wes Stiefer

Piano, Daniel Herman

Childcare, Pam North

Sexton, John Callahan

Pastor, Rev Hansen Wendlandt