

The Bell Tower

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

MAY 2016

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Treasurer's Report

Fiscal 2016 (through 03/31/16)

Income \$14,312

Budgeted Income \$19,081

Extraordinary Income \$10,000

(sale of mutual funds)

Expenses \$26,851

Budgeted Expenses \$30,037

Socks and Sandwiches

We return to our awesome summer ministry this June! Each Thursday at noon, behind the church in the Guyer Garden, we'll be serving sandwiches and passing out socks and other humanitarian items, for our neighbors in need.

Anyone is welcome: children who don't get their free and reduced school lunches during the summer, homeless campers, anyone who feels drawn to a meal together.

In the first two years of this program, we've seen some great peace and good-will built up for the community, as well as the simple outreach of offering a helping hand.

Talk to Hansen, if you can help volunteer

Book Club usually meets every Tuesday night at 6 p.m. This month, however, we're going to take a break—partly because Hansen will be out, partly because we need a rest after the History of Theology study we just finished.

Watch for news about our next book, which we'll start in on the second week of June, as our summer friends start to arrive.

The kind of ancestors you have is not as important as the ones your children have.

Amish proverbs from
Amish Values for Your Family,
Suzanne Woods Fisher

Worship in May and June

For the middle weeks of May, Hansen will be focusing on his health, so that he'll be able and energetic to serve through the summer and beyond. We are blessed to have so many interesting, faithful, diverse people in the congregation! So, let's hear what they have to say...

The series *This I Believe* will feature Gary Ennor, Kathleen Henningsen, and Russ Peterson, sharing about what experiences and reflections have brought them along their faith journey.

We've all come from such different places; we land on different ideas about God; and we point our lives in different directions. Yet, there is something that holds our humanity together—caring for each other, working through pain, and looking to the future.

I hope you can find inspiration and fellowship through these three worship services!

To look ahead a little further, May 29 through June 19 will be the perfect time to invite your friends who might be a little hesitant about Church.

Let's face it, there are a lot of weird things about Christianity: some of the stories, ways people describe their beliefs, how some folks act, weird pastors on

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Sixes

—Hansen

I listened to a sermon recently, really directed at pastors, but I think the premise could be helpful for us all. The preacher basically asked which of these things our focus tends to be on:

- getting through the next six hours of responsibilities, or
- arranging for the next six days of business, or
- planning the next six weeks of work, or
- getting through the next six months until something eases up (which it never does), or
- maintaining your spirit to be and perform where you are called for the next six years?

Sabbath and service is a difficult balance, but most of us lean far, far too heavily toward getting things done.

I'm going to try to move that back towards appropriate rest and recovery, especially over these next weeks and months

The Deacons care for our congregation and community in many ways. One way is by bringing meals to people in need. But there are only four Deacons, and many in our congregation who can cook.

So, if you would be willing, once in a while, to make a meal for someone who is sick, please tell Deacons Bette Ventrella, David Ford, Tricia Stiefer, or Katie Haynes to put you on a list, and one of them

after my shoulder surgery. With only one arm for quite a while, I won't be able to type as fast, or write very much, or give hugs, or carry tables.

So, partly I'm going to ask for more of your help to lead this church to care for this community. And partly, I'm going to try to model healthy priorities and better habits.

Whatever falls through the cracks, my hope and prayer is that a few hours less work, or a slightly less stressful week, or few entries on my packed calendar, or a less hyper-ambitious vision *now*, in this season, can actually prepare this congregation for one heck of a strong ministry in 2022! May it be so!

If you have a pastoral emergency over the first few weeks of May, please call Rev. Joanne Dobie (970-685-4784), who will be on call while Hansen starts his recovery.

will get in touch with you when food is needed in our community.

Also, during his month-long recuperation from surgery, Kathleen will arrange a few vegetarian meals for Hansen.

Contact her at 303-717-6440 or kathleenjhenningsen@gmail.com.

Time to dust off those cookbooks! One-armed chopping is difficult!

Rocky Mountain Mission

NCPC ANNOUNCES ITS 2016 ROCKY MOUNTAIN MISSION COORDINATOR!

Wes Stiefer is a life-long member of the Presbyterian Church (USA), an Ordained Elder, and has served in many different capacities at the congregational, Presbytery, and Synod levels over the years.

He took part in a mission trip to Mexico in 1992 and returned a changed man: "From the

moment mission work touched my heart, I was called to serve more and more".

For the last 24 years, Wes has focused his efforts on educating and mentoring youth and leading mission trips. He has helped lead 22 mission trips and was integral in the formation of the Rocky Mountain Mission program in 2014, fulfilling his



Rick Carus (Wes' mentor), Lauren Simpson, and Wes Stiefer - shown here in 2007 on the Navaho Nation in Ganado, AZ. Who says you can't have a little fun on mission trip?

dream to host groups and help those in need in his local community. "It is exciting to travel throughout the US and Mexico, serving those in need, but I also realize there is need in my own backyard." He served as Work and Community Coordinator for mission groups in 2015 and we are thrilled to have him serve again in 2016.

We currently have six churches lined up to take part in the Rocky Mountain Mission summer 2016 program! We will welcome young folks from Farmington, New

COMPASSION IT is a nonprofit organization and social movement that inspires compassionate actions in the lives of every person it touches. It believes that when you "compassion it" in your daily life, you can positively impact the entire world.

Their wristbands make compassion accessible.

Mexico; White Bear Lake, Minnesota; Fort Calhoun, Nebraska; Houston, Texas; along with groups from Denver & Boulder.

The teenagers will eat and sleep at the church, do outreach work around the community, and learn about their place

in God's great drama, through the wonder of our mountains.

Here are a few things you could do, to help welcome and support these young folks coming into our community.

- Do you know of someone of lesser means, who might need work on their house, or other help?
- Are you part of a service organization that has a labor-intensive project teens could help with?
- Can you cook a meal for a dozen or fifteen folks, to welcome one of our groups?
- This is the hard one... Might you be able to offer a shower for a few kids, so they don't have to drive and pay at the Gilpin Rec Center through the week?

We need you to help support these young folks coming into our community to offer their hard work. Help is needed during the following weeks this summer: June 19 - 25

- June 26 - July 2 • July 17- 23 • July 24-30
- Aug. 7-13.

Too inconvenient? Too much to ask? Relax.

It may appear daunting on first blush, but no worries – take a mental vacation for a couple days. **THINK GOLDEN RULE!** How would you like to be welcomed under similar circumstances?

Then come back and revisit the requests and opportunities outlined above. Besides, just where is Christ recorded as saying, "Follow me; mine is the convenient path."

If you can help with any of these items, please talk to Wes Stiefer or contact him at: (ncpctreasurer@gmail.com).

They are an effective and tangible tool for introducing the concepts of compassion and mindfulness in homes, schools, workplaces and hospitals. COMPASSION IT wristbands influence positive behaviors through a pass-it-on ripple effect, and have an impact of peace and mindfulness that affects everyone.

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[Worship in May and June Continued]

television... This series, *It's Not That Weird*, will try to connect especially to people with questions and suspicions about faith—which might be some of you, alongside all the new folk we hope to introduce to this church family. Let's grow our community, deeper and wider!

Parking at NCPC

A built-in benefit of being a neighbor to Nederland Community Presbyterian Church is that I get to brag to folks about all the great programs we offer the community. Whether it's inspirational services, Summer Socks and Sandwiches, helpful youth mission trips or fiery book discussions, I'm proud to share information and resources whenever people ask me about the little brown church.

Unfortunately in the recent months it seems there's been some confusion about parking, and I've had some people who attend church functions parking in Peak to Peak Counseling's parking lot. I wish I could be an overflow space, the reality is this has led to some challenges, complaints, and cars being towed.

Please, if you're enjoying one of our powerful programs at church, park in one of the church parking lots or along the road. Thank you for spreading the word!

©— Amy Skinner Hartman

Men's Group usually meets the third Sunday of each month at 4 p.m. This month, however, Hansen *and* Jim are both out. So, let's postpone our gathering until June 12 (and leave Father's Day to you and your family).

Fellowship

Thank you so much to Barbara, Allison, and Haydn Hart and Anastasia, to Liz and David Ford to hosting Fellowship in April, and to those community-building hosts who have signed up to sponsor treats and drinks in May.

It means a lot to share memories, struggles, woes, and celebrations after service on Sundays with others. Spirits walk away lighter; bellies walk away fuller.

We are still looking for hosts for two Sundays in May and for all of June. Sign up on the kitchen door at church or contact Kathleen.

— Kathleen

Corner for Youth

A place for news, reports and updates on our church youth AND a place for our youth to let folks know what's happening, what's needed, your concerns. Let your VOICE be heard!!

Youth Group

– Thanks for a fun year learning about Religious Diversity—with your Christian heritage and your neighbors' traditions! Young people, watch for summer invitations to take part in fun events with the Rocky Mountain Mission folks. Adults, you be ready for when we do another series on Religious Literacy, maybe this fall.



Religious diversity program at NCPC

In our Prayers

Please keep these folks and circumstances in your daily thoughts and prayers:

Rich Deubel; Judy Anderson; Delores Cieloha; Rev Gibney's brother; Marylou Harrison and family; Janet Irwin; Linda Jones; Kaitlyn Lammers; Chuck Miller; Karen Moss; Morggan O'Neill; Miles Pancoast and family; Torin Perret; Family and friends of Tom Roczen; Rhonda Skeie and family; Gail and David Skinner; Mike Smith; Jim Stevens; Keri Stiller; Vince Suich; Pat Whalen; love and consideration within the church and denomination; for those serving in the military; all the youth and leaders in churches that will be participating in Rocky Mountain Mission

Sunday School

Sunday School continues to be a time of learning and fun and song and prayer. We have been studying about the Old Testament and learned about Moses and the 10 Commandments.

We even had a surprise visit from Naomi (thank you, Kathleen!) and learned about Ruth and Boaz and faithfulness.

We did several crafts to reinforce the Easter Story and shared our "resurrection eggs" at Big Church.

A very special lesson was when Pastor Hansen taught us all about the Last Supper and why and how we celebrate Communion. We even got to help out with the Big Church Communion that day.

Our last Sunday School class before our summer break will be May 22. We will resume again in September.

But in the meantime please join us for Vacation Bible School June 27 - July 1. Details will be forthcoming.

May Birthdays

16 Luke Harrison	18 Carolyn Armstrong
17 Rita Justice	20 Genette Sizer
17 Del Lynd	25 Joye Stanich

Coffee and Conversation usually meets every Thursday at 9 am. This month, however, we're going to take a break. We'll come back in June, with caffeine, compassion and curiosity!

May Anniversaries

19 Mary Wingate & Dave Blanchard
31 Gary & Pat Ennor

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:

Elder for Christian Ed, Aimee Tomlinson
Elder for Fellowship, Kathleen Henningsen
Elder for Finance, Marylou Harrison
Elder for Mission, Dennis Whalen
Elder for Property, Jim Reis

Elder for Worship, Dean Rundle
Deacon, David Ford
Deacon, Katie Haynes
Deacon, Tricia Stiefer
Deacon, Bette Ventrella
Treasurer, Wes Stiefer
Director of Music Ministries, Annie Savage
Piano, Daniel Herman
Rocky Mountain Mission Coordinator, Wes Stiefer
Childcare, Pam North
Custodian John Callahan
Pastor, Rev Hansen Wendlandt

Mission

Mission Team – Dennis Whalen

Working with the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFFA), Boulder County and United Way, the Food Pantry has participated in the interviewing and hiring of a Mountain Resource person who will be able to meet with people who have unmet needs, identify what services are available from EFFA, Boulder County or some of the more local providers.

The people may then get signed up for those services without having to go down to Boulder. This is a significant change from what has been available in the past. It will provide significant help to much of the under served population of the entire Peak to Peak region.

We at the Food Pantry are very excited to have this process moving forward, and are eager to get the Mountain Resource person trained and started in this position.

The Food Pantry plans on working with the Nederland Elementary and Middle/Senior schools so that during the Summer months the Food Pantry will prepare **bag lunches for children** that receive school lunches during the school year. This may be limited this Summer to one bag lunch a week due to limited resources. This will supplement the breakfast and snack available to these children. We hope to be able to expand this in the coming years.

Work is in process to have the Food Pantry be part of Colorado Cares for the 2016 fund raising campaign. There are multiple steps that have to be completed but the primary one, a minimum amount of assets needed to qualify for Colorado Gives is now achievable.

The Nederland Food Pantry's annual fund raiser is set for May 21.

Approximately 25% of the Food Pantry's clients come from Gilpin County and the Food Pantry has been encouraged to apply for funding from Gilpin County by the county commissioners as part of that county's next budget cycle.

A note about photos for the newsletter

Most of us like to see photos of local interest in the newsletter. Feel free and encouraged to submit yours.

That said, please include names of the folks (incl. animals) in the photo AND the more pixels, the better — think at least 1MB in size, preferably larger.

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life Step Four: Empathy

– Gary Ennor

The author, Karen Armstrong, recounts the story of Buddha who was isolated in his father's palace away from the realities of suffering in the world.

When his eyes are finally opened, he immediately leaves home in search of ways to help people bear sorrow and suffering.

It is his empathy that moves him to help others. It is this choice that leads ultimately to his enlightenment.

The ancient Greek tragedies dramatized the myths of suffering which evoked empathy for people struggling with conflicting loyalties and the disastrous consequences of their choices. Tragic drama refined the emotions and taught people ways to experience them appropriately.

Art, drama and films can help us learn empathy. We experience empathy as we recognize suffering in others, identify with it personally and then experience the desire to respond and relieve the suffering. Empathy is non-judgmental.

Our own suffering helps us to recognize it in others and to respond from compassion. Empathy springs from an understanding that we have been (and may be again) in need of the material or spiritual help that we can give now to another.

Although too long to include here, Armstrong provides ideas for meditation to increase one's understanding and compassion for others.

Check it out. Read the book.

Step Five: Mindfulness

The purpose of mindfulness, one of the practices that brought the Buddha to enlightenment, is to help us to detach ourselves from the ego by observing the way our minds work.

Practice is more important than theory, and you will find that it is possible to work on your mental fitness just as you work out in the gym to enhance your physical fitness.

Mindfulness is a form of meditation that we perform as we go about our daily lives. It is designed to give us more control over our minds so that we can reverse ingrained tendencies and cultivate new ones.

Just as musicians have to learn how to manipulate their instruments and an equestrienne requires an intimate knowledge of the horse she is training, we have to learn to use our mental energies more kindly and productively.

In mindfulness we mentally stand back and observe our behavior while we are engaged in the normal process of living our lives. We discover more about the way we interact with people, what makes us angry and unhappy, how to analyze our experiences, and how to pay attention to the present moment.

We become aware of the more automatic, reactive mental processes of the old reptilian brain. We begin to learn to live in the moment, observing the way we speak, walk, eat, and think.

The Tibetan word for meditation is *gom*: “familiarization.”

Our mindfulness practice will familiarize us with the action of the four basic drives in us — the Four Fs — that animals, including humans, are said to have adapted to: fighting, fleeing, feeding, and reproduction.

There is no quick fix. Over time and with consistent practice of mindfulness we will notice those emotional and thinking habits and characteristics that do not serve us well. We may then consciously choose to replace them with more appropriate responses.

We haven't become who we are overnight. Patience and understanding are called for as we learn mindfulness. This is a non-judgmental game — no shame and no blame — for ourselves or others.

When we notice our tendencies to drift into reactive mindlessness, as we will, we learn to notice this and nudge ourselves back towards mindfulness.

Meditative exercises are designed to support this transformation.

Next month: Step Six: Action

On Suffering from Compassion Cultivation Training

I'm enrolled in the eight week CCT program that meets for two hours each Tuesday evening at the Boulder YWCA.

There are only three of us in the class with our instructor, Amanda Mahoney. This is fewer than normal, yet the class dynamics are working very well.

When I jumped feet first into the Charter for Compassion, I didn't really have a clear understanding of what compassion meant, let alone how to practice it appropriately and effectively.

In addition, I have usually experienced a gut level resistance to the word *suffering*.

As a child I was in the hospital many times and experienced several rather major surgeries and later a good deal of physical therapy. These experiences generated some physical, emotional and psychological pain — immediately and years afterward.

However, I never heard my parents or siblings use the word “suffering.” Perhaps as a result I never perceived it as suffering. It was just the way it was and it happened to many other kids as well — some a heck of a lot worse.

As a result, my notion of suffering was that long drawn out, long-faced, world's greatest victim stuff portrayed on *Queen for a Day* during the 50's.

Ugh! There's no way I'd want to be like that!

So where is this going? Well, CCT has a definition of suffering that I find intriguing and useful.

Suffering is the space between our expectation and reality.

You might also look at it as the gap between your intention, or intended results, and what shows up or how things turn out.

If that's useful to you, use it. If not, let it go. ☺

[COMPASSION IT from page 2]

Remember, we can each do something small to make a big change in our world: COMPASSION IT! (Make it a verb)

COMPASSION IT is a proud partner of the Charter for Compassion.

