

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

JULY 2016

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Treasurer's Report

Fiscal 2016 (through 05/31/16)

Income \$25,756

Budgeted Income \$31,801

Mutual funds sales Income \$10,000

Expenses \$45,314

Budgeted Expenses \$50,061

Worship in July

Our new worship series is *Tools of Faith*. Over six weeks, we will build a table in worship, as worship. (Don't worry, our traditional table will come right back.)

Each step we take and each tool we use, will offer a metaphor for the life of faith. So, if you have any friends who tend to like the workshop more than church, this might be the time to invite them out!

First, we do not measure each other in judgment and cut each other out, but we come to the table together, welcoming the diversity that strengthens us.

Second, the holy traditions are like a glue that holds us together, and our decision to orient ourselves toward the divine is like a clamp that draws us closer than we could be otherwise.

Third, we'll drill to the heart of the matter, to learn about the love at our core, that serves to hold all Creation together.

Fourth, some of us turn to the right, some to the left, and that can throw a wrench into relationships, but any good table needs a lot of nuts like us.

Fifth, living a better life takes a long process of sanding down our edges and building up our best habits.

Sixth, the table is set; how much of faith is us coming to sit, and how much is God saving us a spot?

Socks and Sandwiches

Some Thursdays we get one or three folks come to eat a sandwich and take a pair of socks; other Thursdays we've seen a dozen. Either way, Socks and Sandwiches is offering our homeless/campers and anyone in need a place of respite and peace.

Thanks to all our great volunteers. We continue this ministry through the summer, if you'd like to get involved.

Congregational Meeting

Every year in January we are mandated to hold a Congregational Meeting to manage some of the important business of the church, namely electing our new class of Elders and Deacons, as well as reviewing the annual budget.

Starting last year we decided to also hold a mid-year Congregational Meeting, to include our summer participants.

Join us this year **after worship on 24 July**, to hear a State-of-the-Congregation report, and to review some proposed by-law changes, so that we can keep this church thriving for the next year and the next century.

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.



NICHE work

Hansen continues to work with the Nederland Inter-agency Council on Homeless Encampments, as part of his community engagement and ministry to the homeless/campers.

Our law enforcement partners have done a ton to improve their communication together and their presence in the main campsites; and we've seen fewer incidents of violence.

We've made some real progress to reduce the potential for wildfires; and we haven't had a single fire escape a ring this summer. The Forest Service is consistently engaged, for instance by sponsoring a stewardship day to prepare the campsites.

The Sheriff's office is sending inmate crews to cleanup, and the County Commissioner's office has arranged to haul away the trash. We continue to build peaceful communication with the homeless/campers themselves, particularly through the church.

Lately, we've even met with representatives from Senators Gardner's and Bennet's offices, to investigate possibilities for a national study or larger scale response. The issue of homelessness on public lands is exploding nationwide, especially here.

As frustrating as it can be for our community, it is a relief to know that we are having as much success as anywhere in the country!

New member class

In 2014 NCPC was the fastest growing Presbyterian congregation in the region.

Last year we continued to add new members, although we laid a few folks to rest also.

This summer, you have another chance to formally join this crazy church family. We'll have three discipleship classes, over lunch on **July 10 & 17**, and before church on **July 24**. Try to make it to at least two, so you can get to know other new folks in the church, share faith stories, and learn about this congregation and the holy tradition it follows.

There are no tests, but you do have a chance to declare your humble walk with God.

Summer folks who are members of other churches back home, you can take part and become "associate members".

And anyone who chooses, can become "official members", with the full ability to vote on formal issues at the congregational or sometimes even the denominational level.

New Directory — One thing after another has been a thorn in the side of our **New Directory** project, but it is still moving ahead! We have pictures and addresses for nearly 200 members, participants and friends of the church. Very soon, we will have electronic and printed copies, to help us know each other better!

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!!



Rocky Mountain Mission

The first two Rocky Mountain Mission groups have been busy around town! They transformed Chipeta Park, worked on a home for someone in need, helped a senior with yard work, helped out at the Carousel of Happiness, started a garden at Town Hall, and more!

Next, we get groups from Omaha (17-23 July) and Houston (24-30 July).

Again, these 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.

Talk to RMM Coordinator Wes Stiefer (ncpctreasurer@gmail.com), if you can help make them feel at home, or know of a good project they could do to help our neighbors.



Mission

Mission Team

– Dennis Whalen

The Nederland Food Pantry completed another successful fund raiser that will help considerably in providing food assistance to those within the greater Nederland Community. Just a reminder, the Food Pantry provides food assistance to supplement the food people are able to obtain elsewhere, for those who can provide proof of a local address.

The Food Pantry is collaboratively working with the Clothing Closet and the Indian Peaks Radio Club to apply for a grant for heat in the Community Center's West wing rooms that're used by these organizations. We're hoping that we can make these a much more comfortable and useful environment during the Winter months.

The Food Pantry is also doing initial work, hopefully, to get a grant to get showers in the Community Center in the next year. This will require the approval of the Nederland Board of Trustees which will depend on the identification of plans for

the use and maintenance of the showers such that they don't become a future problem.

The Clothing Closet is closed for the summer months and will reopen in mid-August. Over the summer a fund raising effort will be initiated to obtain the necessary funding to purchase clothing racks so that the Clothing Closet doesn't have to clear all the racks and return them to Mountain Forum for Peace to be used for the MFP's annual yard sale.

We had 8 adults and 3 children attend the initial Summer Socks and Sandwiches. We expect this number to grow as the word spreads among the homeless community. This provides a wonderful opportunity for communication between Nederland folks and the homeless resulting in a much better relationship.

If you treat others with respect they'll respond with respect.

(Pssst! That's you and me folks.)

July Birthdays

- 2 Martha Ann Hogrefe
- 6 Nick Kozel
- 8 Bob Kochen
- 11 Ray Rovey
- 14 Barbara Stiefer
- 15 Bonnie Greenwood
- 22 Aaron Berkeley
- 24 Michelle Kozel
- 24 Judy MacDougall
- 25 Al Nelson



Let Your Voice Be Heard!
Contact Annie Savage



MEN'S GROUP

... usually meets the third Sunday of each month at 4 pm. This month, that would be **17 July at Salto.**

Let's come celebrate Jim finishing his latest round of chemo, and raise a toast to Mark's dad, who just a few weeks ago took his final lap around the rally course of life



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

All the youth and leaders in churches that will be participating in Rocky Mountain Mission; Judy Anderson; Anastasia and Brooke Blinebry; Willi & John Brocklehurst; Marylou Harrison's family; Mike Haynes' family; Don Henningsen; Doris Hobaugh; Robert Manes; Miles Pancoast and family; Russ Peterson; Rhonda Skeie; David Skinner; Mike Smith; Jim Stevens; Vince Suich; Atashnaa Werner; Love and consideration within churches and denominations in turmoil; For those serving in the military; Safe travels for all our summer partners at church.

Vacation Bible School

Did you like Vacation Bible School? You have another opportunity for children to enjoy the music and arts and stories!

Christ the King Community Church in Black Hawk, is welcoming kids to their VBS, July 18-22, 6:30-8:30 each evening.

They meet at the Gilpin Rec Center. Call Patty Unroh for any information, 303-582-5753.

WORSHIP

FATHER FORGIVE ME, FOR I KNOW NOT WHAT I DO

— Dean Rundle, NCPC Worship Elder

You may know how it goes. Your job moves around the country – three years in one church, four in another, and maybe a couple years where your shadow doesn't darken the halls of any church. You arrive in a new town, and look for a place to find peace and comfort for an hour on Sunday mornings.

That was me in Nederland in 2003 when I first stepped into NCPC. For the next 12 years I attended off and on – completely on the receiving end of the benefits offered by our “Little Brown Church”, and the people who inhabit it.

Last year you might say the Spirit moved me (Baptist friends would say I was “convicted”) to formally join NCPC as a member and start giving back a little for all the joy and comfort I'd been receiving here as either a frequent or occasional visitor/worshipper.

I volunteered to host the after-service fellowship a couple times (Spirit telling me to start giving back) and in less than a year the darndest thing happens. The preacher calls me and says that certain, possibly irrational, souls have suggested that Dean Rundle should be considered for appointment as Elder for Worship, and to serve on the NCPC Session for a term of three years.

As a former life-long Methodist, and only a novice Presbyterian, (I seem to recall that the Missouri Synod Lutheran elementary school I attended was fairly critical of Calvin and those pre-determination Presbyterians he spawned) I'm not quite sure what Elders and Sessions are. But, I can't blow off the Pastor – in for a penny, in for a dollar – so I say, “Sure, I'm willing to do that”. I took my vows in April and have been trying to figure out I'm supposed to do since then.

I have always received great peace – the “peace that passes understanding” - from attending worship services and I want to do what I can to facilitate that peace and joy for as many people as we can cram into our Little Brown Church. I need your help and guidance to do that.

My first personal goal is to get to know more people better. I know more faces than names, and look forward to studying the new directory to help me put those together. I'll do better at visiting with those of you I don't know in fellowship.

Secondly, I hope to hear ideas from the congregation – members, regular worshipers and visitors - about our Sunday services.

Please let me know what you like, what you don't like, and what we can do to make our worship more rewarding and meaningful to each person and family who grace our sanctuary.

If the Spirit is moving you to serve as an Usher or Liturgist, let me know. Whether you're from a “founding family” with a century of membership at NCPC, or someone new to our mountain home, let me know what you think.

Please call me any time at 303-570-3190, or email me at bluguzman@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and working to make our church as much as it can be for as many people as possible.

Thanks and God Bless You.



Emily in Guatemala

Congratulations to Emily Haynes! On her summer break, Emily is traveling to Guatemala this July to teach science at Escuela Proyeto La Esperanza, a School for a Plan of Hope. Pray for her kids to be receptive and respectful, and ask her about this adventure when she returns.

Deacons

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 a few of them, and a whole bunch of you who can cook! So, if you would be willing, once in a while, to make a meal for someone who is sick, please tell Tricia Stiefer or David Ford to put you on the list, and the Deacons will get in touch when it is needed.

July Anniversaries

- 7 John and Judy Anderson
- 12 Frank and Susan Lutz
- 17 David and Liz Ford
- 30 Tricia and Wes Stiefer

NCPC Property Report - June 2016

— Jim Reis, NCPC Property Elder

The annual church clean up day happened on June 4th. We had 6 church members come pull weeds, mow/weed eat grass, sort through old stuff in the closet and plant flowers. One non-member also came up from Longmont to plant flowers and pick weeds (Shirley, my 70 yr old mother). With the limited help we had, we focused on the Guyer garden area. It looks much better than last year at this time. My thanks to Pat and Gary Ennor who planted many beautiful flowers in the garden a few days in advance of the cleanup day. There is still much weed pulling to do in front of the church ramp/parking spots. Getting our church members to come put in a couple hours work once a year has been a real challenge. I don't know the answer to this but currently, the few do the work of many.

Mark Stringfellow (my neighbor) came down at my request to look at a drainage issue we have in front of the church. Turns out we have a sump pump in the crawl space under the church that is pumping rain water into a low area right in front of the church. We determined I needed to dig a 75' long trench, 20-30" deep to the creek for proper drainage. This would have been extremely labor intensive using a pick/shovel to get through the tree roots and rocks. I wasn't sure it would get done this summer. Mark brought his heavy equipment down during week and used a trenching tool to complete the work in 2 hours. He saved me many hours of work. I am very grateful that a member of our community who doesn't even attend out church, dedicated his time, fuel and equipment hours to help us.

A recent attempt to break into the church destroyed the window screen by the rear door. I don't know the details of this hopefully unsuccessful break in attempt but found the screen ripped up. David Ford accepted this repair project and will get it fixed this month.

The request for storage of heavy equipment in the church parking lot by the NEDPEDs contractor (sidewalks project) this summer is a non-issue. We made the parking space available during the week as the shared use agreement with the town requires. The contractor decided to store their equipment on the ball field next to the teen center. This was due to the requirement that they move the equipment from the parking lot on Sunday mornings for our church members.

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Pickin' in the Peaks

— Annie Savage

In what is fast becoming a tradition, Nederland Presbyterian erupted in song yet again in the week immediately following the end of the school year.

Pickin' in the Peaks Family Bluegrass Camp is a camp founded by Annie Savage (fearless Nederland Presbyterian Music Director) with the help and partnership of Barb Hardt and Doug Armitage and co-directed by teacher and songwriter, Kevin Slick.

It brings together kids and adults in the beautiful setting by the creek. It is a joy to spend some of the most beautiful weeks of the summer in Nederland, making music with great folks.

The camp, which added funding for 4

scholarships donated by the church, welcomed about 30 campers to the camp this year in addition to 5 faculty members from the band Jeff Scroggins and Colorado.

The camp runs the second week of June each year and features world renown bluegrass pickers teaching the traditional bluegrass instruments in addition to daily lessons in jamming and singing as well as song-writing and performance practice.

The folks at Pickin in the Peaks hope to continue occupying the church once a year for this special opportunity. They are grateful and blessed to share the building and express their thanks to the folks at Nederland Presbyterian for making this happen yet again!



Continued – NCPG June Property Report

I installed a dual hose fitting on our outside faucet. Last year the garden hose was disconnected almost daily for campers to fill their water jugs. The faucet is only 6" from the ground making reconnecting the hose a 5 min struggle each time the garden needed to be watered. I placed a 2' length of hose on 1 side for campers to more easily fill their jugs and the garden hose on the other.

I installed a garden hose reel near the outside faucet to make rolling the hose up easier and encourage others to water the garden occasionally (stated hopefully).

A large piece of flagstone on the steps near the bridge has come loose. As this gets worse this will become a hazard for our elderly members. Looks like the flagstone needs to be re-cemented in place to fix it right, this is on my list to complete.

Good bye, Kathy!

Kathy Lammers has been a great part of our congregation for about a year and a half. She was a caretaker for Betty Munson, sung in the choir, and served on Hansen's Pastoral Relations Committee. Now, her youngest daughter Kaitlyn is finishing college in Kansas and they are going to move to the Seattle area together. Get this: they are looking for a good church first, and deciding where to live when they find one! Godspeed to you, Kathy! We'll miss you.



Vacation Bible School — June 2016

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
Director of Finances, Wes Stiefer
Director of Music Ministries, Annie Savage
Pianist, Daniel Herman
Rocky Mountain Mission Coordinator, Wes Stiefer
Interim Dir. of Childcare, Samantha Harrison
Custodian John Callahan
Pastor, Rev Hansen Wendlandt

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life — Step Seven: *How Little We Know*

Early in her career, Karen Armstrong was profoundly influenced by a footnote in a book that referred to the “science of compassion” — as a model for a religious historian.

Here “science” refers to a method of acquiring knowledge; becoming empathically and scholarly attuned and focused to the historical period being researched.

In addition, the researcher must expand her perspective so “*that it can make place for the other;*” entering into the conditions of that time rather than imposing hers on history.

Impressed with the notion of making place for the other, Armstrong discovered “*that it entirely changed my conception of religion.*”

We are immersed in a highly opinionated society. Talk shows encourage us to express our views. Yet, do we really know what we’re talking about? The internet and media often appear to legitimize mere speculation and the wildest fancies.

All too often we impose our experiences, interpretations and beliefs on others and events; arriving at harmful, inaccurate, and disparaging conclusions about them, their religions and even whole cultures.

As Armstrong reflects, “*It often becomes clear, when questioned more closely, that their actual knowledge of the topic under discussion could comfortably be contained on a small postcard.*”

Leaping to judgments and forming inflexible, frozen beliefs is the ego at work. You identify with your opinions and not others. Your way, or line of reasoning, is the right or the one true way, and that of others, if not evil and destructive, is hopelessly misguided. As a result, you become quarrelsome, self-righteous, behave unkindly and marginalize those who have not been selected to receive the true word as you have.

Regretfully, religious thought and feelings are often caught up in this work of the ego. Armstrong suggests that *religion is at its best when it helps us to ask questions and holds us in a state of wonder—and arguably at its worst when it tries to answer them authoritatively and dogmatically.*

Socrates saw that wisdom was not about acquiring information to arrive at inflexible conclusions. His wisdom was only that he knew that he knew nothing. He described himself as a gadfly — stinging people to question all of their perceptions, particularly the ones they were most sure of.

His method of inquiry bewildered many because it led them to perceive the depths of humanity’s ignorance. This was shocking and unsettling, yet many found that it led to *ekstasis* — an experience of standing outside their former selves.

Religion is at its best when it helps us to ask questions and holds us in a state of wonder—and arguably at its worst when it tries to answer them authoritatively and dogmatically.

In addition to making place for others on the path to learning to become compassionate, we also are called to step outside our former selves.

The Chinese philosopher and mystic Zhuangzi said that the only thing worth asking was a question that threw the listener into doubt and spiritual uncertainty.

He noted that the unenlightened person is like a frog at the bottom of the well. The frog mistakes the small patch of sky it can see as the whole. Once it crawls out and sees the immensity of the sky, its perception is changed forever.

That is our challenge to becoming compassionate persons; we need both the curiosity and the courage to crawl out of the well — to acknowledge our unknowing and the mystery of life — and that act very well may change forever our conception of life, our purpose and our very being.

Now I’m wondering if answering the call to a compassionate life is to begin the climb

Book Club is currently in the middle of *Truth Speaks to Power*, by Walter Brueggemann.

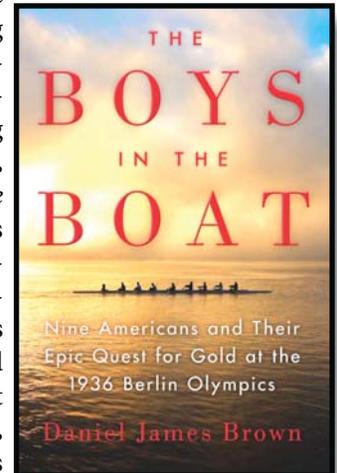
Wednesday nights weren’t great for everyone, so **back to Tuesdays**, we’ll start a new book on **12 July**: *Boys in the Boat*, by Daniel James Brown.

Frankly, our last book was way too heavy, and this June book is a bit technical.

So, for July and August, right as we enter into the Olympics, let’s turn to something softer and entertaining and inspiring.

This is the fantastic story of the 1936 US

Olympic men’s rowing team. Wonderfully written, touching and exciting, *Boys in the Boat* follows one member specifically from his childhood in the Great Depression, through his hard work learning to row with the University of Washington, and onto the epic experience in Berlin.



Interspersed are chapters describing what Hitler was doing to prepare for the worldwide spectacle that you might remember as the Jesse Owens games.

Bonus! Hansen will be using this book with the Nederland Area Seniors, to give a presentation on rowing history and present. This will happen at the senior lunch on 10 August, which happens to be the first day that the Olympic rowing medals are decided. (We might even try to live-stream a race during lunch.) At that event Hansen promises to only talk a teeny bit about his own rowing and coaching career, but at Book Club, you might hear a few, ahem, extraneous stories.

out of the well — generating the willingness and courage to set aside fears and trepidations and risk changing one’s perspective forever.

Then perhaps, *somewhere ages and ages hence*, that new perspective might just garner the greatest of all approbations: *Well done, thou good and faithful servant....*

Could it get any better than that?

Next month: The Eighth Step
How Should We Speak to One Another