

# 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

AUGUST 2016

COMMUNITY MEETING AUGUST 2; BE THERE — PAGE 3

ROCKY MOUNTAIN MISSION — PAGE 3

PROPERTY REPORT AND GARDEN — PAGE 4

BOOK CLUB — PAGE 5



*Sometimes wisdom comes only after great foolishness. Let those without faults cast the first stone...*

## Worship in August

We've been building our table for a month, and it's almost done! Don't miss the final product on 7 August, when we pull up a chair, to enjoy communion together.



And one of our most popular services every year will be 21 August, when we celebrate our congregation's 104<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the building's 101<sup>st</sup>! Stick around afterwards for the wonderful Back-to-school Community Pot-luck!!!

On 28 August we start a new series, On the Trail. We'll follow Moses and the ancient

**Men's Group** meets the third Sunday of each month at 4 pm. This month, that would be 21 August at Salto. Come grab a beer or coffee, and get to know the other good guys in the church!

### 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.

Hebrews on their monumental camping trip. When I go camping, I get warmth and vision from a safe campfire, just like Moses received comfort and guidance from his Burning Bush. Sometimes in the summer, you absolutely need bug spray. That wouldn't have done much with the plague of locusts, but what if we had some sort of spray that worked against the plagues of injustice today? Of course, on any hiking trip, you need a good tent to come to after sore feet, oppressive rain, and all that lurks in the dark. Moses and the Hebrews wandered for 40 years, giving birth to God's community that offers comfort, healing, and hope. Hopefully your hiking trip ends with a beautiful mountain overlook. Moses ended his life with a final view of the Promised Land, and we can always take solace in God's promise of new life.

### 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**.

## New members

A number of folks in the church have asked about the process of becoming new members: year-round "official" members or seasonal "associate" members.

Some folks have joined our interest group, to talk about their faith stories and learn about the history of this congregation and denomination.

Others are looking forward to the next round, when we try to have a dinner (with childcare) to talk about all this good stuff in one fun evening. (That will happen 17 or 18 August, 6:30 at the church!)

Either way, we plan on welcoming a new crop of folks, to declare their personal faith in God and communal affiliation with NCPC, in worship on 21 August. On that day we celebrate our congregation's 104 years, let's also give praise for the new folks who are looking forward to a future of great things!

## Congregation Meeting

Every Presbyterian congregation gathers in January for their official annual meeting. Because NCPC has so many folks who are only here in the summer, the Session decided to also invite you into the ministry of administration, with a special summer meeting. So, after worship on 24 July, we gathered to review some pro-

*[Continued on page 5, Col 1]*

## Nederland Inter-agency Council on Homeless Encampments

Nearly three years ago, I (Hansen) was invited to join the Peak to Peak Human Services Task Force. I didn't have much to say about transportation or health care. Eventually, I would get involved with affordable housing.

But first, I began to learn about Nederland's problem with homeless and quasi-homeless campers. People told about their impact on the Food Pantry, trash on public lands, and increased fire danger.

Occasionally some of the difficult transients had bad interactions with the community, law enforcement, and business owners; and there were heavy stories about drug use and its impact on our young people. The problem had been building recently, and no one had much of an answer on how to manage it.

In my first summer here, the church responded by opening Socks & Sandwiches to the campers. We could offer compassion and a small dose of charity, with the added benefit of having a place to engage, build trust, and share a message about the behavior our town is concerned with. That program has evolved well, with great volunteers, assistance with trash, and a flyer to point the homeless to where they can get significant

*[Continued on page 3, Col 1]*

## 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



We welcomed two groups in June, one from St Andrew Presbyterian (Boulder) and Good Shepherd Pres (Northglenn), and another small group from First Pres (Farmington, New Mexico). July got rowdier with a big group of teenagers from Fort Calhoun Pres (a suburb of Omaha), as well as a team from New Hope Pres and St John's Pres (both from Houston). This August we will be seeing old friends from First Pres (Guymon, Oklahoma), which was our first RMM program back in 2014; and our final group of the summer is from the Presbyterian Church of White Bear Lake (a suburb of Minneapolis).

So far we've seen the groups accomplish so much in town!

- Spread gravel and mulch at the playground at Chipeta Park, to keep the children safer and the plants happier
- Painted all the benches at Chipeta, and beautifying the Veteran's Memorial
- Tilled an area near Town Hall, for a new garden
- Three days of work hauling slash, building a retaining wall, digging for a foundation, and prepping for re-

## Mission

### Mission Team

— Dennis Whalen

The Food Pantry was on site at the Nederland shelter - High School - from the opening of the shelter for the Cold Springs Fire until the closing, actually getting things started prior to the Red Cross making an appearance. The Food Pantry provided drinks, snacks, and hygiene supplies for those staying at the shelter, and for numerous firefighters who slept and/or showered there. In addition the Food Pantry helped facilitate the Boulder County Disaster Assistance Center locating in Nederland for several days to provide immediate assistance for those impacted by the fire. During the Cold Springs fire a large amount of food and drinks were donated and either distributed or stored at the High School because access to the Community Center was not possible while the fire Command Post was located there. Thanks to the help of several volunteers the unused items were moved back to the Community

Center with some being donated to Nederland for storage in case of other disasters, and the remainder will be distributed to Food Pantry clients. Due to the added need for clothing resulting from the fire, the Clothing Closet is preparing to open 2-3 weeks earlier than planned. Weekly lunch bags were provided to approximately 25 children who were attending the Summer School program and who participate in the School Lunch program during the school year. The hours for our Mountain Resource Liaison, Kristi Venditti, have been extended until early August to allow for Kristin to respond to the needs of those impacted by the Cold Spring fire. The Nederland Food Pantry is now part of the Colorado Gives program thanks to extensive work by some of the Board members. This, we expect, will allow for added donations, especially towards the end of the year.

construction on a home for a local man in need

- Set up and cleaned up at Socks and Sandwiches each week
- Painted, weeded, yardwork and window-cleaning around the church
- Sealed, window-washed, built and stained picnic tables at the Carousel of Happiness
- Yard work, cleaned gutters, and hauled slash for three households of local seniors
- Painted, cleaned carpet, and re-organized the Clothing Closet, so it could be open earlier than planned, for people who lost clothes in the fire
- Re-built a chicken coop for a local senior
- Hauled slash and fire debris for a family whose house was surrounded by the fire
- Cleaned slurry off the garage for another family whose house was surrounded by the fire
- Worked at fire mitigation for another family whose house was near the fire
- Helped carry heavy boxes of books for the Library fundraiser
- And we have two more weeks of great work to do!!!

Every group works four days a week, and enjoys rafting or hiking in RMNP one day. They sleep and cook at the church, and shower at the Gilpin YMCA. They gather for devotionals every night, learning about their place in God's drama of life through singing, praying, goofy activities, great conversation, Bible study, and plenty of creativity.

Thanks to folks who have provided meals for our teens, families who have hosted them for s'mores and fire-ban-appropriate 'campfires' (sometimes in the fireplace), and to the volunteers who have tagged along to help get dirty and sweaty! And of course thanks to Wes, who is working with every group, every day!



help down in Boulder.

We regularly see peace building at these lunches, for instance when the police bring popsicles to share or when a camper directs us to an illegal and dangerous campfire.

As this church has become—precisely what Jesus calls it to be—the place that is reaching out to the most needy—we’ve been able to celebrate a homeless man’s new job, sing happy birthday to a homeless woman, and offer a ministry of space for people who often have nowhere, or nowhere friendly, to go.

However, genuinely addressing a problem requires both a personal touch and real systematic work. So, with Amy Hardy (formerly of the United Way and currently chair of the P2P Human Services group), two years ago we began to gather other people and agencies that work with the homeless.

What can the USFS do for trash? How difficult is this problem for the law enforcement agencies? What messages do the Boulder homeless services give to folks about camping here? What can we actually do to work toward solutions?

For two years the Nederland Inter-agency Council on Homeless Encampments (because everyone wants a ‘niche’) has been meeting to figure out what we can do together, to try addressing the bigger picture.

We have built great collaboration between the governmental officials and the social workers, only to find that sometimes the social workers are more strict and the folks with uniforms are more compassionate.

We have put in place policies for fire prevention, developed strategies for trash removal, made it easier for law enforcement to deal with the most difficult transients, encourage the Boulder shelters to keep people out of the mountains when it is still life-threateningly cold, and engaged community volunteers to join the effort.

We have sought advice from other areas that deal with homeless camping on public lands—only to find out that nowhere in the country has a more active and collaborative group than this. So, we started to push even further, to bend the ear of real power brokers, and aim toward deeper awareness, understanding, and impact around the nation.

We don’t always agree (ask Alisha!), and we obviously haven’t solved the problem, but we

are making good progress.

When I came to this church, it was impressed upon me, in no uncertain terms, that the Pastor’s role is to care for the whole community, not just the people in these pews. I wouldn’t have it any other way. In fact, when other pastors ask me the standard pulpit puffing question, “How big is your church?” I tell them, “The Nederland area has about 5000 people, and we try to serve them all.” Now, this sentence might be the controversial jump, but I firmly believe that by serving our homeless and quasi-homeless campers, directly with compassionate charity, and indirectly by attempting to manage the situation through collaboration and policy-making, we also serve, in an important if tertiary way, all of our 5000 neighbors.

*We have sought advice from other areas that deal with homeless camping on public lands—only to find out that nowhere in the country has a more active and collaborative group than this.*

No one is trying more than NICHE, to make our area safer, with regard to the situation presented by homeless campers. And part of that process of safety, I believe, includes respecting and caring for the homeless themselves. Peace radiates like that, in all directions, back and forth.

*The Nederland area has about 5000 people, and we try to serve them all.*

Now, the Cold Springs fire has shone a bright light onto the problem of homeless camping. Most people do not know the work we’ve been doing behind the scenes: the focus on fire pit repair, the water jugs at campsites, the constant education. Many people are also misinformed about the work we’ve been doing at church: as though our few socks and sandwiches are pulling people away from the massive outreach available in Boulder. Some people are just blisteringly mad, and need to direct that somewhere, so it lands here, towards that “enabling” church and that pretentious holier-than-thou Pastor.

When Denver Channel 7 was interviewing me about the fire, I had a list of soundbites ready for the reporter. Whatever she asked, I was ready with a short phrase that could fit on television. But then, the young lady behind the camera stood up and asked a

question: “Would you be as Zen, if you had lost your house?” At first, I told her that local news stations aren’t allowed to ask hard questions! Then, I slowly conceded that, no, I don’t think I would be able to be as peaceful, if my home was lost. I admitted that I’d probably be hurt and angry, and want answers, and I might even fall into the trap of blaming anyone who might be involved with the problem. If I had lost my house, maybe my mind or heart or brokenness would have told me that someone didn’t do enough, or someone allowed this to happen, or someone didn’t solve the problem they should have.

Later—doesn’t it always happen after the conversations are ended—I realized, if I had lost my home, I would hope that someone was there to remind me not to get caught up in my anger. I would hope that someone was working for a solution, even if the problem was practically insoluble. I would hope that someone would listen.

So, that’s what I plan to do. I understand that the fear and anger are real, and that some of us will disagree about the next steps, and that some people want to do the impossible. I get that. And because of that, I will continue to offer the message of peace that we need. Because we still have a real problem, I will continue to convene the NICHE group, to try to find better solutions. Because people have stories of pain and different ideas for helping, I will continue to listen. And because I know that many people are still very angry, I will continue to offer anyone to join me on, and hold me accountable to, a path of grace. I won’t wag my finger at anyone who is still overwhelmed by the trauma, but I will point to the only way I know that leads back to engaged love.

One simple way to do that, is to invite you to the **Community Conversation on Homelessness and Fire Danger on Tuesday 2 August 5 p.m. at the Community Center**. This is a joint program of NICHE and the Board of Trustees, open to everyone to share their concerns and learn about what is possible.

Of course, I am also always happy to meet with anyone, one on one, to hear your own particular concerns and explain whatever I can about my goals, what I’ve learned from the many agencies we work with, and how the whole community might integrate your ideas. I don’t expect to convince everyone, but we can, I have no doubt, work toward some common ground.

## NCPC Property Report - June 2016

— Jim Reis, NCPC Property Elder

Hello NCPC congregants,

If you haven't come or gone to church by way of the back door in the last month, then you are missing out. I always appreciate seeing your smiling faces in the pews on Sunday and chatting together during fellowship over coffee. That said, if you exclusively using the front door you're probably unaware of the great progress we have made in the Serenity garden this summer.

Last year I was a new Elder and did a less than stellar job meeting my responsibility of keeping the garden beautiful for our church. I know this because several of our more senior members told me I had let it go to pot and they didn't mean the wacky weed. After 25 years serving in the Army, the only digging in the dirt I had ever done was for a foxhole. This year I was determined not to blame it on my "black thumb" and attempted to learn a new skill.

I took advice from Violet and others over the winter and made a plan to improve the garden this year. I began battling the dandelions/weeds in May and with help from a few members started the garden

revival at the annual church cleanup day on June 4th. I planted pansies to go with the begonias Gary & Pat Ennor put in. I watered, weeded and put time in attempting to bring the garden back. Things were looking better than last year but I realized I needed help.

After seeing all the fantastic arrangements in giant flower pots around town, I asked town hall who is the master gardener beautifying all the businesses in our community. The answer is Elizabeth Allen, owner of Coloring Colorado gardening. I got in contact and promptly hired her to bring our garden back to it's former glory.

If you haven't seen the results, I've attached some pictures as proof showing her awesome ability of transformation in just 12 short hours of work. Liz planted more than 3 dozen geraniums last week that were donated to the church by a generous benefactor. If you have a garden but you don't have time to tend it, I highly recommend Elizabeth Allen. You can contact her at [Info@ColoringColorado.com](mailto:Info@ColoringColorado.com) or (303) 818-6208.

I invite you all to take a few minutes on your way home from church this Sunday to stop and smell the flowers.



### Guyer Garden

*Elizabeth might know some botany, but Jim Reis has been so dedicated, coming to church many times each week to water and weed. He has arranged a number of volunteers to help. He built up one of the islands, so that we don't deal with erosion on the sidewalk. While working on the garden, he meets some of our homeless neighbors, and has helped direct them where to get clean water and where to dump their trash.*

*Beyond the garden, the Session is blown away each month at the list of things he does to keep our building standing and our grounds beautiful. Tell that man thanks!*

Any of you readers glad you grew up



doing this rather than this?



### August Anniversaries

- 2 Larry & Lynn James
- 4 Dean & Janice Rundell
- 5 Carolyn Armstrong & Mark Moll
- 11 Emily & Mark Haynes
- 27 Carol & Bob Rhoads

### August Birthdays

- 7 Linda Bennett
- 9 Michael Rundle
- 15 Kristina Heller
- 16 Paul Turnburke
- 22 Jaydene Morrison
- 24 Emily Haynes
- 24 Sierra Rae Tomlinson
- 28 Dean Rundle
- 30 Dennis Whalen

**Congregation Meeting** - Continued from page 1 posed changes to our by-laws and to hear the financial state-of-the-congregation.

Back in January Nancy Lynd helped point out that we were not working decently and in order, so the Session took on the task of cleaning that up. Thanks so much to their diligent and tedious effort over the last six months, to update our by-laws, making them smoother, legal, and consistent with how we do business here. You can find a copy of the recently updated version on our church website or Facebook page.

We also heard from Marylou about our financial challenges. Some of the messages that came out of discussion were the importance of financial giving, the value of inviting your friends to church, and other creative ways to give, such as an upcoming button to give online and ways to give tax free through stock options and wills.

We looked at some noteworthy national trends in church participation:

- In general, 85% of Protestant churches have declining membership and participation
- In general, Presbyterian membership has fallen 24% in the last 15 years
- The good news is that here at NCPC, we have been growing consistently for the last three years, from approximately 115 participants in 2013 to approximately 170 participants in 2016.

We also looked at NCPC overall financial health:

**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

**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!

### 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 Mtn Mission Coordinator, Wes Stiefer  
Interim Dir. of Childcare, Samantha Harrison  
Custodian, John Callahan  
Pastor, Rev Hansen Wendlandt

- NCPC financial contributions have remained mainly flat over the last ten years. Current expected income is \$76,322, but the budget for expenses this year is \$120,146. That means we face a budget deficit of \$43,825, and we will have to take money out of our reserves to cover the shortfall.

- Out of 170 participants, 44 have committed to pledges for 2016. Other participants make regular contributions, and still more give as they are able.

What can we do to better match our income with our expenses so we can continue the great mission work done by our congregation:

- Continue the conversation with others in our church. Is NCPC mission work important to us? Do we want to do the hard work to raise the funds needed to balance our budget? Are we willing to dig deep to give a bit more?

- If you don't pledge, consider starting. It's never too late. Pledges help us budget and know what funds we can expect.

- Bring a friend to church. Spread the word about the amazing work done by folks at NCPC.

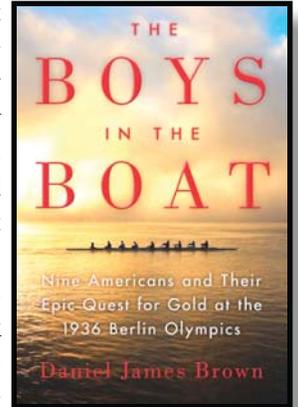
- Give the gift of time. Teach Sunday school. Take over fellowship one Sunday morning. Join the deacons in their work to support folks in our community. Be part of the worship team or the mission team or the finance team.

- Simply: Participate in whatever way you can.

**Book Club** recently started reading *Boys in the Boat*, by Daniel James Brown. You can catch up as we enter into the Olympic season!

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 an 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!



Pray for Divine guidance for all in Nederland to work our way through the paradox of living the teachings of Jesus and still keeping our homes safe from fires caused by campers - All the youth and leaders in churches that will be participating in Rocky Mountain Mission - Judy Anderson; Anastasia and Brooke Blinebry; Willi & John Brocklehurst; Don Henningsen; Doris Hobaugh; Robert Manes; Miles Pancoast and family; Torin Perret and family; Russ Peterson; Rhonda Skeie; David Skinner; Mike Smith; Jim Stevens; Vince Such; For those serving in the military; and safe travels for all our summer partners at church.