

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

SEPTEMBER 2016

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY - CHILD CARE DIRECTOR - PAGE 2

ROCKY MOUNTAIN MISSION - PAGE 2

STOP HUNGER NOW! - 2016 - PAGE 3

HOMEWORK CLUB - LEND A HAND - PAGE 4

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.

Socks and Sandwiches

This was our third summer of Socks and Sandwiches. Thank you, to our amazing volunteers all summer!

Ned and John moving tables, Wes and the Rocky Mountain Mission kids cleaning up, Barb and her kids making sandwiches, the whole Food Pantry crew bringing goodies, Officers Paul and David offering laughs and a friendly ear, and all our supporters who helped in big and little ways... Thank you all for making this a peaceful, joyful event!

Over twelve weeks we served 126 meals (of which 12 were children) at the events themselves. Otherwise, some extra sandwiches made their way to West Mag to be shared. We passed out dozens of camping guides, 80 trash bags, a couple hundred socks, and lots of kindness.

Sure, some of the people who are homeless and "home free" (transient/ alternative-lifestyle folks) took advantage of a few too many granola bars, or many nights more than they should have been at campsites, or just anything they could get....

But every year we make real relationships that transform lives. A few years back we helped a family settle in the area, and now they are housed,

Men's Group meets the third Sunday of each month at 4 pm. This month, that would be 18 September at Salto. Come grab a beer or coffee, and get to know the other good guys in the church!

Worship: August-September

Do you think summer is coming to a close? Well, for the next worship series, we're taking a camping trip *On the Trail* with God!

Moses was a great camper. He had a campfire that never went out (burning bush), must have had the best bug spray around (fighting the plague of locusts), was an epic hiker (wandering in the wilderness for 40 years), and made it to a great lookout point (over the Promised Land).

We too can be inspired, fight injustice, make our tent where we belong, and start a new life full of God's promises. Come to worship this August and September to see what life can be like *On the Trail* with God!

jobbed, and schooled up here.

Last year we helped a family in real crisis with a 4-day-old baby, and now they are living in Grand Lake, with a job, in preschool, happy.

This year, many folks cared for one of our neighbors at his absolute lowest; and while he might still sound despaired, I really think we helped him see a light from within his deepest hole.

So, thank you all, for what you do to make this town a compassionate corner of a harsh world.

New members

Welcome to our newest members of Nederland Community Presbyterian Church!

John Records and BG & Patti Brooks joined as "official" members.

And some of our seasonal participants joined as "associate" members: Jan & Jim Kimble, Bob & Carol Rhoads.

Ann Thompson will join as an associate member next month. **Get to know our newest folks!**

Cold Springs Fire

Nederland Community Presbyterian Church has been doing a lot for our neighbors affected by the Cold Springs Fire, and to help reduce the risk for the future.

After receiving a grant from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, to which we have donated many times over the years, we directed \$5000 to the [Peak to Peak Healthy Communities Project](#), to help meet any needs that come up for folks significantly affected by the fire.

Insurance will do a lot, but if the stress has built up and you need to get away with your partner, make a request.

If you want to plant a special tree of hope before you rebuild, make a request.

Whatever can give your life a little balance and joy, make a request through [P2PHCP](#) (303-810-5409).



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

Nederland Inter-agency Council on Homeless Encampments

Many of you know we are a hub for the homeless and quasi-homeless in this area—which has definitely proved controversial.

Fewer locals know that one of the other things we do, to help them and to encourage peace for the whole community, is to offer guidance and work toward collaborative solutions.

So, the church put together a simple flyer that describes: where to camp, USFS rules, fire management, what to do with trash, services in Boulder, how to best respect the Nederland community, etc.

And Hansen has been leading the Nederland Inter-agency Council on Homeless Encampments. NICHE brings the US Forest Service, various law enforcement agencies, Nederland Fire, Boulder homeless services, governmental agencies from Town Hall to Congress, local business leaders, and so many more agencies, to try to compassionately and wisely manage our homelessness issues around Ned.

There are no easy fixes, but we believe this is an important part of reducing the problems that our community faces, while honoring people who are most in need.

September Anniversary
2nd Barbara and Bill Stiefer

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

This year we hosted six youth groups (from Boulder/Denver, new groups from New Mexico and Minnesota, our old friends from Oklahoma, and great youth and leaders from Omaha and Houston). In all, we welcomed 85 participants, who completed 63 separate outreach projects, at 29 work sites!

Each team works four days a week, and enjoys one adventure day of rafting or hiking in RMNP. They sleep and cook at the church, and shower at the Gilpin rec center. 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. (For instance, one of our evening activities is to open with a dramatic reading of Amos 5, take a break to eat s'mores, then discuss what happens in their own lives back home, when white and brown and black things get smushed together... Racial justice never tasted so good!)

Thank you to church members who provided fellowship meals and came to work alongside our visitors. And big thanks to Wes Stiefer, who coordinated the mission and spiritual reflection, and worked tirelessly to make their experience powerful.

If you haven't done so already, [like Rocky Mountain Mission on Facebook](#), and keep up with their exploits. Soon enough we'll have a slideshow of all the fun this summer, and in October, we'll start making plans for 2017!

Children's Ministry

Sunday School returns, 11 September! Your favorite teachers Aimee and Nancy will be there, with some other great helpers, to teach our awesome and growing group of youngsters!

Also on 11 September, we welcome our new Childcare Director, Sara Sandstrom-Kobi! Sara has a degree in Church Education, and is ready to teach gospel stories about love, and children's singing. She and her husband have two young kiddos, who we'll get to know also.

Sara is walking into a growing children's program, so she'll need your help. We are asking for volunteers to sign up for one week a month: at the least to help with the kids' transition from their story-time to childcare, but also to help Sara if there are more children than it's safe for one person to care for. Please talk to Hansen or Aimee, if you could be such a helper.



Imagine all the people
Living life in peace... You...
You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one



Fort Calhoun, Nebraska



Boulder-Northglenn



Houston, Texas



Farmington, New Mexico



Guymon, Oklahoma

Mission

Mission Team – Dennis Whalen



This is a picture of a 'Camper Bag' that is provided once a month by the Food Pantry to those people requesting something to eat

who have an ID that does not show a local address.

The Food Pantry is working to help alleviate questions by some members of our community that believed the Food Pantry was enabling people to move to the area and get fed on a regular basis. Note: exceptions can be made for families or pregnant women but, thankfully, we see very few of those folks among the homeless.

We met with a Gilpin County Commissioner to discuss the Food Pantry's actions during the Cold Springs Fire and where and how we might assist Gilpin if/when a disaster occurs in that part of the Peak to Peak region. The Food Pantry was appreciated and thanked by various organizations for our involvement in supporting the Shelter.

We're working to finalize a Resilience grant with the Mountain Human Services Collaborative (Boulder County, United Way, Emergency Family Assistance Association) to help assure funding for the Mountain Resource person, who has been very successful in aiding people to obtain access to various government services that, for a variety of reasons, these folks found it very difficult to access in the past.

Kristi Venditii, who started the Clothing Closet, has passed on the position of Director to Annette Franck, so Kristi can focus on her position as the Mountain Resource person. It's expected Annette will be added to the Food Pantry Board of Directors at the next meeting.



Judy Anderson; Doug Armitage; 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; Mike Smith; Jim Stevens; Vince Such; For those serving in the military; and Safe travels for all our summer partners at church.





The Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life

by Karen Armstrong

The August newsletter skipped the eighth step to a compassionate life in favor of cleaning up following the Cold Springs Fire. This issue will catch up with both steps eight and nine.

The Eighth Step - How Should We Speak to One Another

Reading the title of this chapter brought to mind immediately the thought that it must include the “of” one another and not just “to”. Although much mischief is also generated in face to face communication, judgment and derision of those not present all too often push aside loving kindness and compassion in our thoughts and conversations.

Years ago I read of a man who had great respect for Abraham Lincoln and always carried a five dollar bill with him (back when it bought much more than a cup “coffee” at Starbucks). Whenever faced with a difficult circumstance, he pulled out that bill and asked himself, “What would President Lincoln have done in this situation?”

Might not those who follow Christ* do the same thing? When faced with a trying circumstance, contemplate this: What would Christ do in a similar circumstance? Are there any verses in the New Testament in which Christ is recorded as being unloving or not compassionate?

Armstrong reports that Buddha had his own Golden Rule: “A person who loves the self should not harm the self of others.”

Buddha viewed knowledge as a process of self-discovery — experience in and of life — rather than “book learning.” You don’t gain this by parroting the opinions of others, but rather by finding the truth within yourself.

Rather than browbeating others to our point of view, look for ways to develop and pose Socratic questions that lead to fresh insight rather than a repetition of the facts as our limited perception sees them.

Ask yourself if you want to win the argument or seek the truth. Are you willing to make a ‘place for the other’ in your mind?

Enamored with and entranced by our

modern gadgets and tempo, many traditional arts become lost; listening is one. Authentic listening goes beyond hearing words; it includes observing and being alert to the underlying unspoken messages, particularly in angry speech. Note the pain and fear below the surface that masquerades as something else.

Every fundamentalist movement Armstrong has studied has its roots in the profound fear of annihilation and began with what was perceived as an assault by the liberal or secular establishment.

The practice of compassion does not imply becoming a doormat in the face of injustice, cruelty or anger. However, responding to injustice with hatred and contempt will simply pour fuel on the fire.

St. Paul spoke of the compassionate manner of speaking to one another — charity is patient and kind; it is never boastful, never conceited, never rude; never envious or quick to take offence; keeps no score of wrongs; takes no pleasure in the wrongdoings of others

Begin moving now toward mindfulness — increasing awareness — of the way we speak to and of others. Is it how you wish to be spoken to and of by others. What goes around, come around.

* I wrote “follower of Christ” and not “Christian” because many who claim membership in the latter appear to have little or no commitment to the former.

The Ninth Step – Concern for Everybody

Armstrong shares from the Qur’an “Behold, we have created you all out of a male and a female and have formed you into tribes and nations so that you may get to know one another.”

Tribalism — racial, cultural, religious and political — is alive and well. Yet all religious traditions have components that call us to apply compassion beyond our own group. It’s imperative that we get to know one another and generate concern for all our neighbors in the global village.

This implies the “self-discovery” noted in the previous chapter — direct face to face engagement — not “television learning.”

The Dalai Lama points out that we have become so interdependent, war is outdated; no longer relevant. Destruction of our neighbor ultimately leads to our own suffering.

In a battle of orthodoxies, all claim the true and only way. One cannot, or will not, accept or understand the opposite viewpoint. We are called to generate a

mature and compassionate way to deal with such conflicts. It is long past time to put away childish things.

The Sufi philosopher Muid ad-Din ibn al-Arabi [1165-1240] warned against religious exclusivity. *God is not limited by any one creed.*

I think it was Tom Hanks who said in an interview that he grew up in dysfunctional families — more than one because of divorces and second marriages. By the time he was a young man he had been raised in four separate religious traditions; all professed to being the one true “Way” and following any other led to destruction.

Letting go of tribalism can become a spiritual process. Creating a personal practice of mindfulness is one access point to the journey.

Compassion Cultivation Training includes meditative mindfulness practices that invite thoughts and expressions toward others, the world and oneself such as:

- *May you be free from suffering*
- *May you be free from fear and anger*
- *May you know peace and joy*

Simple as it may be, subtle, expanding changes begin with regular practice.

May you experience the peace and joy of loving kindness and compassion.

Next Month: The Tenth Step – Knowledge



Last August the church raised enough money to gather with the community to pack over 10,000 meals for children in South Sudan.

This year we are aiming at **11,000 healthy, tasty meals** for children in need! The [Stop Hunger Now](#) packing session will be Wednesday 12 October, 6:30 at the Teens Inc gym. Whether you are 3 or 93, you can be a helper! It’s fun and a great way to introduce your neighbors to the church.

Meals are usually directed toward schools, so that families are encouraged to send their children for an education.

And where else can you get your hands on international outreach, without flying somewhere? The event should take about two hours, with some set-up and clean-up on either side.

[Talk to Hansen](#) if you are interested in joining us, or if you want to donate to 17,000 in 2017!

Cold Springs Fire *continued*

From that same grant, we donated \$2500 to the United Way, in order to fund five mental health vouchers, for people who lost their homes, people in the burn area, and for the great folks who worked on the fire crew.

Those supporters need support. So, if you were affected, please take a look at the [fact sheet](#) (on our website) that explains the process and [submit an application!](#)

These can be used for your regular therapist, to talk to someone new, in Boulder or Nederland, or even for massage therapist!

Thanks to Amy Skinner for all the behind-the-scenes work that make this possible!



Back to School Community Pot-luck

Thanks to everyone who took part in the Back to School Community Pot Luck!

Special thanks to Aimee for arranging so much, for Jim and his grill, for Bob taking down so many tables, and for the many dozens of people who shared food!



The kiddos had fun on the bouncy castle, and some of you didn't even know that Hansen's pulled 'pork' BBQ was really a fruit!



Homework Club

Want to do something really worthwhile? Want that kind of experience that helps a child, while melting your heart in surprising ways? Have a lot of patience and a sense of humor and untapped creativity?

Last year we started a program at the elementary school to help first graders who may not have the support at home to complete homework or have schoolwork reinforced. The ideal is to establish a mentor relationship with these kids. Typically there are 6-8 kids earmarked for this after school program. The teachers always supply the homework, usually math. We give the children a snack and then break up into small groups. Those who finish early, work on language arts and reading skills. We supply the supplementary materials. Volunteers can get creative....whatever works to reach these precious children!

You don't have to be a teacher to help with this worthwhile program....just bring a warm smile and lots of patience. We meet once a week, on Tuesdays from 2:45-4:15. If we get more volunteers we can make a schedule so that helpers do not need to be there every week. The program will start in early October and run until the end of April.

The principal, Jeff Miller, is totally in support of this program and would love to see it grow. He loves the idea of the community becoming more involved with the school. Everyone benefits!

Give it some serious thought. And spread the word if you know someone who might be interested. Volunteers will be asked to pass a background check. The school can provide that information.

Please contact Nancy Waldron [540-305-7576](tel:540-305-7576), if interested.

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
- Director of Childcare, Sara Sandstrom-Kobi
- Custodian, John Callahan
- Pastor, Rev Hansen Wendlandt

