

The Bell Tower



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Opportunity to Serve Your Church

ORDER OF WORSHIP
CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Beginning with the March Newsletter and the March 5th Order of Worship, your help is needed publishing this newsletter and the bulletins used in Worship and special services at the church.

Volunteers are needed now to assure a smooth transition in March. Call, email or button-hole Gary or Hansen.

Otherwise...?

Worship in January & February

— Hansen

After the New Year, we start a new worship series!

Jesus often used parables about things like sheep and farming. By comparing that to God, his followers could use what they were familiar with, to get closer to that which was far more mysterious.

But of course, we don't have many sheep in our lives any more, and only a few of us have farmed for a living. So, given our different world, and given the fact that people deal with pretty much the same problems and questions as they have for the last 2000, what sorts of parables would Jesus use today?

Eventually, I believe, he would teach with clever stories about modern technology.

OK, let me admit right up front, I am *not* a technology expert. I don't 'get' computers. I'm even a little scared of my TV remote.

Despite how some of you might assume that everyone under 40 grew up with a phone in their crib, I'm just a little too old, and my family was a lot too poor, for me to have many electronic devices. To be sure, *now* I am absolutely tethered to my iPhone, as a tool—for which I blame ya'll, because some of you can only be reached by telephone, while others only text, and I can only catch some of you on Facebook, even though a ton of stuff gets done on email...all of which fits easily on this one device, along with thousands of hours of good music and all the online Scrabble I could ever want... (So, maybe not only a tool.)

However, all that said, I'm a Luddite at heart, so this series will be a fun challenge.

We simply cannot deny that our world runs on this stuff. Whether it's work or



play, communication or transportation, progress or holding onto the past, software or hardware, we cannot very well escape the ubiquity of technology.

So, borrowing a method out of Jesus' practice, worship to begin the new year will compare what we (sort of) know about Internets and Operating Systems, to learn more about the God who holds it all together with love and runs it on hope, toward a beautiful aim of joy and peace.

Bring your phones to worship (not just Allison), and be ready to interact with our church Facebook page!

Annual Congregational Meeting

According to our tradition, and the organizational rules for Presbyterian churches, we need to have a formal Annual Congregational Meeting at the beginning of each year.

So, please join us for worship this 29 January, and stick around afterwards to handle

some of the important business of the church. All members get to vote on the new church leaders (Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee) and the Pastor's terms of call.

If you have any input on the new bylaws that were passed

in July, please bring that to Hansen by mid-January, so we can prepare for a vote on that as well.

Also at this meeting, the Session will share its 2017 budget, for your conversation and questions.



MEN'S GROUP is back at it in January! Meet at Salto on 22 Jan 4 pm. This is a simple chance to get to know each other better, over a coffee or a beer.

Sometimes we plan a mission project; sometimes we just talk about life or skiing or kids or cars. Guys of all ages are welcome.

ONLINE GIVING

Sure, there is an offering plate every Sunday. But if you can't come to worship, or don't carry cash, now you can also give to NCPD online! Try it out at: www.nederlandcpc.org, with the obvious "Give Now" button. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to support the great things God is doing in this community!

Book Club

THE BOOK CLUB starts back up 10 January, and continues each Tuesday at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary. (This is a little earlier than we were meeting, so that the Bible Study can piggy back afterwards.)

A number of our regular Book Club folks like history, and everyone likes Jesus, so how about a book about the "historical Jesus"? *The Meaning of Jesus* has two

authors: the eminent theologian and liberal religious critic, Marcus Borg, and the thorough scholar and conservative traditionalist, NT Wright.

Together, they discuss (or, debate with kindness) what we can know, what we should believe, and how we might respond in our lives, based on the best historical evidence available, from the

Bible and other ancient sources that help us understand its context and meaning. Borg can be a little precocious and Wright can be heady sometimes, but these friends wrote together, so that all of us could learn, reflect, pray, and deepen our own faith, rather than argue and pick sides.

Let's take a page out of that book!

Bible Study

Bible Study is back! We've tried a couple different times, and folks keep asking for it. So, let's try again, starting on 10 January, and continuing each Tuesday at 6:45 pm in the sanctuary. (This is directly after Book Club.) Our first book will be

the Gospel of Mark, and you can prepare by reading the first three chapters. Together, we'll try to answer two basic questions: What do these stories mean, and why do/should they matter to you? Expect a little bit of history, some theology, a

dose of ethics and spirituality, and a main course of conversation—what do *you* hear the Spirit saying, in any given verse or passage, and what does it make you think and feel about God and what God wants for the world?

Religious Literacy Series

The next Religious Literacy event will be 22 January, on Buddhism. You've all seen Buddhist prayer flags and are certainly familiar with the Dalai Lama.

But what about your mountain neighbors who identify with the religion? How do they live? There are spiritual similarities with

Christianity, but how so, given the deep differences in our history, Scriptures, and concepts about the sacredness of life?

Of course, we'll have a great lunch, with food from Southeast Asia, where Buddhism is most popular. Stick around after worship, 11:45-1:15, and of course, invite your friends!

FUTURE RELIGIOUS LITERACY EVENTS

February 12 – Hinduism

March 19 – Wicca

April 9 – Taoism and other Eastern faiths

May 7 – Christianity

June 4 – Mormonism

New Member Dinner

Once or twice a year we offer an opportunity for some of the new folks in church to consider joining as *official members*. Some people like to remain simply friends of the church, and they enjoy precisely the same fellowship, worship, mission, and pastoral care as everyone else. Others appreciate being able to declare their faith and allegiance to God, in this place and with these

people. The designation of official membership allows them to vote on formal church business, to stand for particular leadership roles, and to influence the policy decisions of our regional and national denominational bodies.

It worked really well last year to meet over a long dinner (as opposed to three Sunday afternoons in a row), to get to know

each other's stories, learn about the history of this congregation and denomination, and to talk about how we understand God and our role in following in the footsteps of Jesus. Hansen will be polling some folks for when a good night might be, to have such a dinner—with childcare, of course. Watch for the schedule to come out soon.

Mackenzie Lecture Series

Each year First Congregational Church (Boulder) hosts a lecture series, with a top-notch theologian.

This year they are welcoming Diana Butler Bass, whose book (*The People's History of Christianity*) the Book Club recently read. Her previous book, *Christianity After*

Religion, analyzes how lived faith is changing in America, in and out of the church.

Her latest book, *Grounded*, is particularly about the spiritual revival happening in spite of lower church participation.

Bass will packing the weekend of 27-29 January with lectures,

workshops, and worship. The full schedule is at:

www.firstcong.net/mackenzielecture.html, if you'd like to go to this free opportunity!

YOUTH GROUP

Each winter we welcome the Purdue University Methodist campus ministry.

They have an annual ritual for New Year's Day, so you won't see them in worship this year. But they will be doing some mission work around town.

And again, they are inviting our teens to come skiing (3 January) and to take part in the evening devotional that night! Details and directions to come.

Mission Team Report

— Dennis Whalen, Mission Elder

The Nederland Food Pantry provided food for over **3,400** clients in the Peak-to-Peak Community this year. These are people you see everyday – your neighbors, your friends, your co-workers.

This year, more locals are facing food insecurity - with fewer dollars to pay their bills and buy food. One factor in this growing crisis is that more than half of our clients, based on a recently completed survey, are now paying 50-80% of their income for housing. Many of these folks have become new Pantry clients. In an effort to address this crisis, expand our client services and provide assistance in times of community emergencies the Food Pantry has:

- **Arranged** for representatives of Boulder County Social Services and other agencies to be on-site during the hours of our food distribution on the first Thursday of each month.
- **Organized** the annual Health and Human Services Fair held each November for the past four years, featuring free

flu shots and Emergency Family Assistance Association Thanksgiving boxes.

- **Provided** "Thursday Food Bags" for local children on the reduced lunch program during summer school.
- **Distributed** Holiday Food Boxes, warm clothing and toys for our clients each December for over twenty seven years - Saturday, Dec 10 for 2016.
- **Partnered** with the Town after the floods of 2013, to be on the front line in providing shelter/food, social services and relief for our Community in times of emergencies. This July, the Food Pantry set up and manned a multi-service area in the Evacuation Center for eight days, during the Cold Springs Fire. Pantry volunteers provided over 1,250 Local evacuees, firefighters and other volunteers with drinks, food, personal hygiene items and comfort
- **Taken leadership** of the Peak to Peak Housing and Human Services Task Force, working with

Boulder County support services and multiple agencies across the Peak to Peak region to improve transportation, medical services, and access to available social services without requiring a trip to Boulder for those with needs.

- **Volunteered** over 3,650 donated, service hours annually to continue the fight against hunger and to promote the safety and stability of our Community.

NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

You may have noticed that the layout has changed from what it was last year.

It's just to illustrate that there are many options for laying out the newsletter; there's no right way, wrong way or perfect way to do it — other than making it easy for others to read (hopefully).

If you have a modicum of word-processing skill, you can do it too — and learn more along the way.

Consider taking it on as your service to the church.

[The was created from a slightly modified template in Microsoft Word. Previous years were created with Adobe InDesign. Any word-processor will work in lieu of a desktop publishing program.]

In Our Prayers



- ♦ Judy Anderson
- ♦ Willi & John Brocklehurst
- ♦ Tami Dawidowski
- ♦ Rich Deubel
- ♦ Crystal Epperson
- ♦ Linda Groves
- ♦ Don Henningsen
- ♦ Shelley Millican
- ♦ Virginia Parsons
- ♦ family of Russ Peterson Rhonda Skeie
- ♦ Mike Smith
- ♦ Jim Stevens and his family
- ♦ Rick & Nancy Tasto Vince Such
- ♦ Lorena Yolo
- ♦ For those serving in the military.

Annual Mission Team Report for 2016

— Dennis Whalen, Mission Elder

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Do you have questions or comments about NCP?C?

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

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

Following are the highlights of accomplishments for the Mission Team during 2016.

Food Pantry and Clothing Closet

- Provided food assistance to 300+ households per month.
- Partnered with the Town during the Cold Springs floods to be on the front line in providing shelter/food, social services and relief for our Community in times of emergencies. This July, our Pantry set up and manned a multi-service area in the Evacuation Center for eight days, during the Cold Springs Fire. Pantry volunteers provided over 1,250 Local evacuees, firefighters and other volunteers with drinks, food, personal hygiene items and comfort.
- Provided lunch bags for local children during the Summer that're part of the reduced lunch program.
- Organized the Health and Human Services Fair, including Thanksgiving food boxes provide by the Emergency Family Assistance Association.
- Provided Holiday food boxes, clothing and toys in December.
- Volunteered over 3,650 donated, service hours annually to continue the

fight against hunger and to promote the safety and stability of our Community.

Socks and Sandwiches

Over 12 weeks we served 126 meals (of which 12 were children) at the events themselves. Otherwise, some 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.

Rocky Mountain Mission

- During 2016 we hosted six youth groups (from Boulder/Denver, new groups from New Mexico, Nebraska 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!

Housing and Human Services Task Force

- Published updated 'Where to Get Help Guides'.
- Continued work on transportation issues with help from Via and Boulder County Transportation.
- SUB GROUP: Mountain Human Services Collaborative
 - Identified funding for a Mountain Resource Liaison who can sign up

people across the Peak to Peak are needing basic services provided by Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFFA) and Boulder County; have obtained support for various social service agencies to have representatives in Nederland during Food Pantry and Clothing Closet on the first Thursday of the month; working to obtain addition funding for the Housing and Human Services Task Force.

- SUB GROUP:

Housing Sub Committee

- Working to get some affordable housing in the Nederland area Assistance provide to repair and upgrade existing housing in need of basic repairs

- SUB GROUP:

Nederland Interagency Council on Homeless Encampments (NICHE)

- Working with Forest Service and law enforcement to assure better management of homeless in a humane manner. Also, working at state level with governor's office to identify ways to address the state wide growing problem.

Stop Hunger Now

- Packed 11,000 meals.