

The Bell Tower

February, 2014

NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

IN THIS ISSUE

Presbyterians?	1
Memorial Service	1
Hosting Fellowship	2
Mission Report	2
Session Needs	2
Focus on Mission	2
What's Coming Up?	3
Stout Men of Faith	3
Youth Group	4
Resources	4
In Our Prayers	4
Coffee Visioning	4
Book Study	4
Birthdays	4
Anniversaries	4
Film Series	5
Filler for Thought	5



1 February 2014



Who Are These Presbyterians?

You may have seen Hansen's latest article in *The Mountain Ear* (themtnear.com/2014/01/what-is-a-presbyterian). Or you may have seen the Facebook post about with the cool graph showing the history of religious divisions. Those were teasers for this February, where each of our four worship services will focus on **The Good News of Being Presbyterian**.

There are a lot of ideas out there about God and Church that sure sound like Bad News, and some have gotten attached to our tradition and founders. So, this month we will try to clarify, redeem and lift up those sorts of things that Presbyterians have long emphasized, like... What is Predestination or Sola Gratia? Why are we called 'Reformed' or, in humor, 'The Frozen Chosen'? Who was John Calvin and why do so many people use his name like a theological curse word? How does our tradition celebrate being and doing

church differently than other traditions? Where is our denomination going next, in the 21st century?

Here are a couple other things worth pointing out, which might not make it into worship, but are definitely worth knowing about the big Church family

from which we get our name.

There are *many* types of Presbyterian churches. During the Civil War, the main Presbyterian Church in this country split, over the obvious issue. In an act of faith in the face of realpolitik, the delegates at that meeting agreed how to divide, and

then worshiped together, singing *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*. For more than 100 years there were a handful of other small groups joining and splintering, but the two main Presby denominations in our country were the northern and southern branches. In 1973, the "Presbyterian
(Continued on page 3)



Memorial Service

I'm sorry to share the news that Shirley Filer passed away Sunday morning. It was a peaceful end to a rich life, and her loving husband Jack was right with her.

The family has arranged to hold a simple memorial service on **9 February at 5 p.m.** at the Nederland Community Presbyterian Church; a time of fellowship and snacks will follow in the fellowship hall.

Friends and community are invited to celebrate her life with good memories, to grieve together this loss, and to give witness

to God's enduring love, which reaches through life and beyond death.

The Filers ask that in lieu of flowers—Shirley hated to cut down such pretty things—that anyone who might want to give something in her honor would donate to either the Nederland Community Food Pantry (checks can be made out to Ned Presbyterian) or the Nederland Area Seniors (PO Box 188, or find Serene at a senior lunch). God bless, Hansen

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

—Psalm 23



Hosting our fellowship time is a piece of cake! C'mon and join us already!

Easier than washing feet...

Have you been looking for a way to serve but can't make a long term commitment? Fellowship on Sunday mornings is for you!

- You can try out that new recipe for appetizers, cookies, pies or whatever suits you.
- Men—this is your chance to show us what a great cook you are.
- Mothers and daughters—sign up for a date together.
- Friends—team up for a fun morning in the kitchen.
- Ask someone you don't know to help you—what a great way to get better acquainted!
- Don't want to cook? We always have goodies on hand to just set out on the table.

New to the whole thing? Let me know, I am happy to walk you through the process.

You can sign up on the sheet outside the kitchen or contact Claudia at 303-258-3447 or claudiaone@wispertel.net

Come be a part of our church family!

FROM THE SESSION – The final 2014 budget was passed in January's Session meeting. If you would like a copy, please email Hansen or Wes (ncpctreasurer@gmail.com).

- We are still in need of someone to serve as Clerk, basically a secretary for our meetings and with the regional body. If God gave you the gift of organization and paperwork, here is your chance to share it!
- We need someone who can accurately count our worship participation. Maybe a family or teenager might like to take that on.

\$1,219.17

That's how much was donated to the Deacon's Fund at the two Christmas Eve services — for helping our neighbors in need in the whole community.

A HUGE THANK YOU to all who contributed so generously. **Halleluiah!**

Report from the Mission Team

SAVE THE DATE: February 23 from 2:30-5:30 the Nederland Food Pantry will be holding it's first annual fund raising at the Nederland Community Center. This will include soup and a silent auction. We're hoping, and expecting, a very large turnout from the greater Peak to Peak community, which is the service area for the food pantry. This will be the only fund raiser for the Food Pantry during the year although, of course, donations are appreciated at any time.

The Food Pantry continues to provide assistance for those impacted by the flood in addition to the clients that

seek food assistance on a more regular basis. This has resulted in the number of people helped by the food pantry in December doubling from the same month a year before. While we do expect that in time the number of people needing help as a result of the flood will dwindle, the overall number of people needing food assistance continues it's slow growth. Thus we're not expecting any significant reduction in the overall number of people served by the Nederland Food Pantry.

I look forward to your support at the fund raiser and throughout the year.

— Dennis Whalen

NEDERLAND FOOD PANTRY
"STONE SOUP"
FUNDRAISER

Sunday, February 23, 2014
2:30 - 6:30 PM
Nederland Community Center

Soups - Salad - Bread - Beverage - Brownie
 Silent Auction and Activities for Kids

Suggested Donations:
 Adults (16 +) ... \$12.50
 Seniors (60 +) ... \$10.50
 Kids (1 year to 15) ... \$7.50

ALSO
 With Your Donation
 Please Bring
 A Non-Perishable Food Item or a Personal Hygiene Item

**"If Everyone Gives A Little -
 EVERYONE Can Eat!"**

FOCUS ON MISSION – We have held great meetings about Christian Education and Worship. Now we turn our attention and appetites toward a **Focus on Mission Dinner, 19 February, 6:30**, place TBD.

How can our church answer its call to serve the least of these? How can we give more support to the Food Pantry? What needs does the town have that we might

be called to participate: with seniors, community groups, kids in need, or whomever? What sorts of global justice could inspire the church? How might we want to host short-term mission trips?

If you have thoughts about these sorts of things, watch the bulletin, Facebook or website for more info; or talk to Hansen!

(Continued from page 1) Church of America” broke away from the southern church, because the PCA didn’t believe in ordaining women. In 1981, the “Evangelical Presbyterian Church” broke away from the northern church, also for doctrinal reasons.

In 1983, those remaining northern and southern Presbyterians rejoined, to form the “Presbyterian Church (USA)”, the denomination with which NCPC is affiliated. We proudly continue to ordain women, and voted in 2012 to allow gays and lesbians to be ordained.

As that debate raged on, many congregations left to join the PCA or EPC, and some others broke off to form the “Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians”, who seem to believe that the Bible is very clearly against homosexuality but should be read contextually with regard to women.

The PC USA is by far the largest Presbyterian denomination in the world, and continues to discuss deeply issues of justice and peacemaking.

One of those issues is ‘divestment’. With nearly 10,000 churches, the PC USA works hard on its financial stability, to ensure things like worldwide mission, employee pensions, and new church developments. As part of our moral investment strategy—a good strategy for individuals too—there are certain companies with which we would not want to invest at all (gambling, tobacco, weapons), and certain companies that might align so closely with our values that we definitely want to invest (maybe a clever inner-city educational program), and other companies for which investment could mean a chance to impact how they do business (a clothing company that we might convince to stop relying on sweatshop labor).

Who falls into those categories, however, is not always so clear. Nor is it clear when we can convince a company to act more ethically. So the question for any church investment is, can we justify our return from a particular company’s profit?

Famously in 2005, the PCUSA remained invested in and engaged with Yum Brands (Taco Bell, etc), and *was able* to convince them to pay tomato pickers more fairly!

That agreement became a framework for the church to engage on the same issue with a number of large companies, even convincing Wal-Mart to pay an extra penny-a-pound this January!

However we have tried for years, unsuccessfully, to urge Caterpillar (and others) to stop profiting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Is our financial return worth the moral implications of their involvement in that fight? Two years ago at our biannual General Assembly, a motion to divest was defeated 333-331. A similar motion will be presented at our meeting this summer.



For cheerier Presbyterian financial news, look toward the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program. You may have heard me talk about PILP at this January’s annual congregational meeting.

First, you can invest through the denomination, and get a rate probably 2-3 times higher than your own bank. (See full rate sheets at www.pilp.pcusa.org)

Second, your investment is dedicated to help new churches build their first building, or existing churches expand and reshape their mission.

Third, those growing churches receive a loan rate from the denomination much lower than any bank could offer. There are plenty of fantastic ways to donate your money, but what an opportunity to do good in the world, while growing your portfolio!

WHAT’S COMING UP – There are a handful of really interesting gatherings happening this month...

Feb 2, 9 & 23 – The NCPC *New Member Interest Group* will meet after worship each of these Sundays, to look at things like your own faith stories, the history of this congregation, and how we understand this little corner of Christianity to be pointing toward Jesus. We’ll talk about what it means to belong, believe and behave in the Kingdom of God, asking questions, reading some Bible, and praying together.

Feb 7-8 – The quarterly meeting of the

Stout Men of Faith

MEN’S GATHERING—All over the country churches run Theology on Tap, Beer & Hymns, Church & Chug, and other sorts of fun activities to reach out to men who feel a lot more comfortable at the bar than on a pew.



NCPC is jumping on the bandwagon, especially in order to take advantage of Stout Month, an annual Boulder extravaganza of dark beers. Of course you can choose a lighter beer, or no beer at all—the point simply is to find a time for us to gather outside the sanctuary walls, and to use our conversation, fellowship and faith to become more stout men.

Hence, **Stout Men of Faith, 16 February**, carpooling from the church at 5 pm, for dinner at Southern Sun



Brewery.
(For the sake of spiritual inclusivity, I am sure

someone more feminine than Hansen will find a way to gather the ladies together for whatever it is that women do...)

Plains and Peaks Presbytery happens in Fort Morgan. Pastors and Elders from all the Presbyterian churches across northern Nebraska and Colorado will gather to talk about a number of issues, and to get ready for our biannual nationwide gathering this summer.

Feb 9 – The *Deacons* are gathering for a Retreat, to train as the caring leaders of the church, and to share ideas on how to work together this year to serve the community.

Feb 16 – The Session is gathering for a Retreat, to train as the spiritual leaders of the church, and to share ideas on how to work together to help our church thrive in 2014!

Feb 16 – Stout Men of Faith (*see announcement above*)

Feb 19 – Focus on Mission Dinner (*see announcement page 2*)

Feb 23 – Food Pantry Fundraiser (*see announcement on page 2*)

The March Newsletter **deadline is Thursday, February 27.**

Youth Group — In Motion!

“One of the greatest benefits of living in a first world country is to have the ability to change people’s lives, not only by faith, but economically as well.

KIVA On January 28th, 2014, the youth group (consisting of Hansen Wendlandt, Katie Haynes, and Wes Stiefer II) donated \$148 to people around the world who were struggling to make ends meet.” [from Katie Haynes]

Through Kiva (<http://www.kiva.org>), a very respected microloan organization, we gave to Donizio in Uganda to buy

beans and maize, Hilary in Georgia to expand her equine therapy business, Susanna in Armenia to purchase livestock, Reina in El Salvador to buy clothing to sell, and Awa in Mali to buy onions to sell.

When they repay these loans, we will be able to share that with five more people!

UPCOMING YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS!

Feb 9th, noon – Faith Questions

Feb 21st, 6:30 – Pizza Art in the Bible

Feb 25th, 6:30 – Giving Back in Worship

IF YOU HAVE EVER WONDERED about a charity you give to—how it spends it’s money; or you wonder whether to respond to one of a multitude of requests for donations, Charity Navigator (<http://www.charitynavigator.org>) is an Internet source for up-to-date information.



Find out how your money is spent, get tips on being a savvy donor, learn about top-rated charities and the consistently low-rated ones, or just search for a particular type of charity.

FIND YOUR WAY TO THANK Janet Turnburke for her 3 years of service as Fellowship Elder; and Gary Ennor for many years as Clerk of Session!

CONGRATULATIONS . . . AND THANK YOU – At our recent annual congregational meeting, Claudia O’Neill was elected as our new Fellowship Elder, Dennis Whalen elected to continue as our Mission Elder, and Kathleen Hennigsen and Katie Haynes were elected to serve as Deacon’s! Give all our church leaders a pat on the back!

THE CHURCH DIRECTORY is long overdue for an update — updated information, new folks and photos — it’s a big job and a very important one.



Can you help out? Gather information? Take photos? Help with layout and publishing? Please talk to Hansen or Gary Ennor.

NOTE: We ran this announcement in the January newsletter . . . and the responses? Well, what can be said? It was underwhelming! That’s right: Nichts; Zip; Nada; Nothing. How about we meet you half way; you need the exercise.



Violet Aandres; Judy Anderson; Cheryl Cwelich; the Filer family; the family of Joanne Haynes; Rev. Steve Holland (Rhonda Skeie’s

brother); Mark Lake; Karen Moss; Kent Snow; Megen Stadele; Megan Stadele’s parents, Cliff and Peggy Johnson; Joye Stanich; James Tillery and Dennis Whalen’s family; for those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis; for those serving in the military.

Suppose all the Bibles of the world were burned, what would befall civilization?

— Ira Progoff (filler for thought, page 5)



January Anniversaries!

8 Ed & Eleanor Busch

February Birthdays!

- 4 Erik Skeie
- 5 Frank Irwin
- 6 Donna Collier
- 10 Bette Ventrella
- 12 Gaylord Morrison
- 14 Linda Groves
- 20 Pat Everson
- 20 Roberta McIntosh
- 21 Judy Hubbard
- 23 John Anderson
- 23 Samantha Harrison
- 27 Nancy Lawthers



RESOURCES AVAILABLE – The Youth Group was recently invited to watch a powerful documentary, *War/Dance*, about three children seeking meaning and redemption after the Ugandan terror. Also, many folks watched another program, *The Star of Bethlehem*, which showed the Biblical and astronomical basis for that part of the Christmas story.

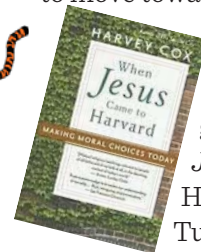
If you want to borrow either from Hansen, just say the word. There is a library full of books there too!

THE NEVER ENDING FOOD DRIVE

needs your help and support; it keeps going on because poverty and hunger keep rolling along in this nation. Thanks for your support and your generous participation.



COFFEE AND VISIONING — In an effort to open up to a few more folks, we are moving to Thursday, 9 am, back at *The Train Cars* coffee shop’s back room. Anyone is welcome to gather for coffee and to discuss who we are as a church, what we are called to do next, and how to move toward it.



BOOK STUDY

The book club has been going strong with *When Jesus Came to Harvard*, by Harvey Cox. We meet each Tuesday at church (or a home – check your Sunday bulletin) for soup, bread and vigorous discussion! You can still join in, and we’re always looking for folks to sign up to provide the soup!

WHAT SORT OF WORLD WOULD THIS BE — If we spent as much on peace as we do on war; if we spent as much on preventing crime as in punishing criminals; if we spent as much on culture as on entertainment; if we were as careful of our thinking as of our eating; if we saved all the friends we make; if we worked as much as we worried; if we were as concerned about our souls as about our appearance. — Anon

SERMONS ONLINE — You can always find sermons linked on the church Facebook group, or now on our website, under Worship.

The Scope of Personal Renewal

When I returned to civilian life after my army service in World War II, I often lost myself in unhappy contemplation of the destructive events of recent history. In one decade from 1935 to 1945, civilization had come precariously close to destroying itself. I found myself especially reflecting on the massive burning of books that had taken place during the Hitler era. Again and again I asked myself what would have happened to civilization if the ritual Nazi burnings of the books had been continued until all the recorded wisdom of humankind had been destroyed.

I answered that question in two parts. The sciences, I concluded, would be retained

in the technology of the engineers. Science would be preserved, although in a stunted form, if only because science is necessary for making weapons of war and for producing commodities to sell. But what of the sacred scriptures, I asked. **Suppose all the Bibles of the world were burned**, the Old and the New Testaments, the Tao Teh Ching, the Upanishads, the Koran, and all the others. If that happened, what would befall civilization?

I used to lie awake wondering what the human race would do if all its sacred scriptures were destroyed. Finally one night the answer was given to me. It came as a simple practical statement spoken in everyday tones. *We would*, the voice said, *simply draw new spiri-*

tual scriptures from the same great source out of which the old ones came.

In that moment I became aware of how vast and self-replenishing are the resources of the human spirit. The fires of Hitler could burn the sacred books, but they could not destroy the abiding depths out of which those scriptures had emerged.

I heard also the words of the Polish rabbi chanting as he was being buried alive: *"Green grass lives longer than Nebuchadnezzar."* God's smallest creations will outlast the power of tyrants. And this is because, as Walt Whitman knew, the simple leaves of grass come from the same infinite, re-creative source as the depths of the human spirit, from which the wisdom and the strength of civilization also come.

That understanding opened a new range of hope for me. Human-kind would not be destroyed. No matter what foolish, destructive acts people would perpetrate on the physical level, new fountains of life would continue to rise from reservoirs deep within. Recognizing that there are indeed infinite dimensions to our universe, the immortality of life began to be a fact for me.

Soon another realization arose in me. If mankind has the power to draw additional spiritual scriptures out of the depth of itself, **why do we have to wait for a tyrant to burn our Bibles before we let ourselves create further expressions of the spirit...?**

Perhaps there are new Bibles, many new Bibles, to be created as the sign of spiritual unfoldment among many persons in the modern era. It may indeed be that the creation of multiple spiritual scriptures, and especially the extension of old scriptures, is an event that needs to happen in our time as part of the further qualitative evolution of our species. The Bibles of the world provide a tradition and a wisdom from which those who are attuned to them can draw sustenance for their lives.

The Bibles of each of the major civilizations are connections to the past. They do not restrict us to the past, but they link us to it. They give us a sense of continuity so that each generation can be reminded that the present moment has been preceded by many that have gone before. No matter how intense our own experience may be, we are not the first who feel it. We are not the first to be groping and leaping our way toward the truth. We need therefore to be aware of what has taken place in earlier times so that we can live our present experiences in an organic relationship with the past.

At a Journal Workshop: Writing to Access the Power of the Unconscious and Evoke Creative Ability, Ira Progoff, (excerpt from Pages 2-4), Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 1992. ISBN 0-87477-638-4

The following film series announcement came from Rev Joe Agne, a retired Methodist minister who works part-time at First United Methodist Church in Boulder. Joe is very much a social activist working toward justice for all people.

If you decide to attend (these are thought provoking videos), consider a donation to the local food bank in Gilpin County, which also serves folks in Clear Creek County.

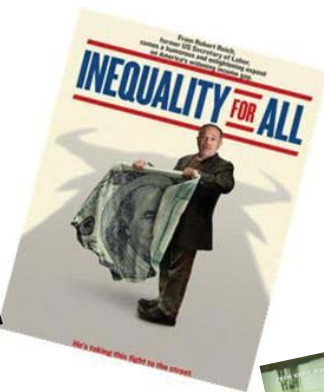
a film series at the Gilpin Library

looking at the great hunger crisis in our country...the evolution
and growth of inequality ...and what we can do...



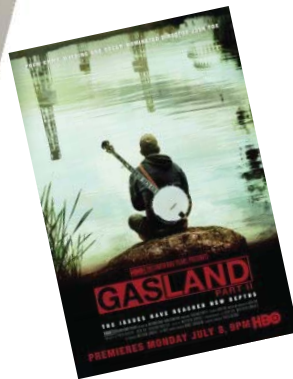
Using personal stories, this powerful doc illuminates the plight of the 49 million Americans struggling with food insecurity. A single mother, a small-town policeman and a farmer are among those for whom putting food on the table is a daily battle.

Sat., Feb. 8, 1:00 p.m.



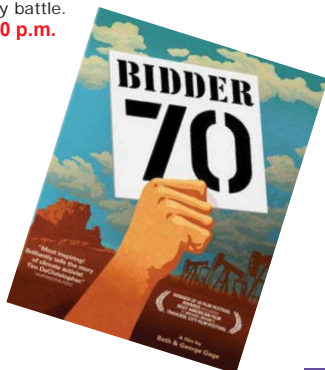
Discussing numerous issues in clear and accessible language, former U.S. labor secretary and current UC Berkeley professor Robert Reich makes a compelling case about the serious crisis the U.S. faces due to the widening economic gap.

Sat., Feb. 22, 1:00 p.m.



...a provocative follow-up to filmmaker Josh Fox's award-winning feature debut GasLand. The new film continues to explore the controversial method of extracting natural gas and oil known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, arguing how dangerous the process is, and how pervasive the gas industry's influence on public policy has become.

Sat., March 22, 1:00 p.m.



... the saga of Tim DeChristopher, who brazenly bid \$1.7 million to win 12 land parcels at a federal oil lease auction. With no intention of paying -- and determined to protect the land -- the activist begins a long legal battle.

Sat., March 8, 1:00 p.m.

**DONATIONS CAN BE MADE TO THE
GILPIN COUNTY FOOD BANK AT
ALL OF THE SHOWINGS!**