

NEW DENVER MONTHLY

The official newsletter of New Denver Church

Wondering in the Wilderness

BY STEVE CARLSON

It's around mile two when the doubts start. Packing and driving breed false confidence, I haven't met the realities of what is coming yet. The engine stops, and my mind is loud, still in the world of emails, messages, and noise.

The excitement still carries me up the first hill.

My mind asks a lot of questions while my body is busy, but they're mundane at first: *Did I get those things done? How many messages will I return to?*

I'm still too clean for nature, not yet sweaty and covered in dirt.

Then, around mile two, the questions get louder.

*How long have we gone?
Why is my pack this heavy?
Can I do this?*

When a mile feels double that, time slows and gravity doubles on my back. The questions of regular life fade, yes, but the new ones are tired, impatient. I am tired and impatient.

Then a view like a Bob Ross painting opens before me. I encounter silence for the first time, shaken free from the lingering thoughts of my phone. The first glimpse of where we're heading, inside and out.

The steps keep coming. For a while, life becomes wonderfully small. All I have to do is take the next step, then the next.

Were those flowers always so bright? I ask, unable to pay attention to anything but the fiery flowers I never learned the name of. A bright lichen becomes a topic of conversation.

The dirt begins sticking to the sweat on my face and arms. Move forward, trusting in God and in Norton to lead me.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

SOCIAL GROUP DIRECTORY

Looking Ahead:

JUL 5 - JUL 26 REGISTER FOR NDC KIDS IN JUNE - IT'S VERY IMPORTANT

REGISTERING IN ADVANCE IS INCREDIBLY HELPFUL FOR OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
[REGISTER HERE](#)

JUL 1 - 31 JOSHUA STATION BACKPACK DRIVE

SEE PAGE 4 FOR DETAILS

JUL 5 & JUL 19 PRAYER DOWNSTAIRS

JUL 18 TACO PARKO MEET UP 4 - 6 PM

TEXT MELISSA FOR DETAILS OR QUESTIONS 7202243692. OR [MORE DETAILS HERE](#)

JUL 18 WOMEN'S GAME NIGHT AT RACHEL K'S HOUSE IN WASH PARK - 6:30 PM

[MORE DETAILS HERE](#)

JUL 19 COFFEE ON THE LAWN

JUL 25 WOMEN'S COFFEE AND CONNECT - 9 - 11 AM AT SARAH OYEDELE'S HOUSE - ADDRESS GIVEN

UPON REGISTRATION - [REGISTER HERE](#)

AUG 2 COOKOUT ON THE LAWN - 7 - 8 PM AT NDC

AUG 3 MISSION & JUSTICE SOCIAL GROUP - 7 - 8 PM AT NDC

AUG 8 WOMEN'S COFFEE AND CONNECT - 9 - 11 AM AT BREANNA STEWART'S HOUSE

REGISTRATION OPENS SOON

AUG 9 DISCOVERING NDC - FOR THOSE WHO ARE NEW OR FEEL NEW TO NDC

AFTER BOTH SERVICES IN THE LOFT

AUG 9 SECOND SUNDAY BRUNCH - AFTER SERVICE

A SOCIAL GROUP FOR WOMEN IN THEIR 20'S & 30'S WHO GRAB BRUNCH AFTER CHURCH

AUG 16 BACK TO TWO SERVICES AT 8:30 & 10 AM

OCT 2 - 4 MEN'S RETREAT

REGISTRATION IS OPEN [HERE](#)

APR 30 - MAY 2 WOMEN'S RETREAT 2027 - SAVE THE DATE!

I noticed I was still asking questions, but somewhere along the trail they'd changed.

Why is there so much scat everywhere? The kind of question I asked as a kid in the woods. I enjoy these questions much more.

Enjoyment begins when the questioning fades.

A breeze cools my face with fresh air, the trees around me vibrant and green.

Camp comes eventually, the sore but accomplished muscles in me thankful for the rest.

Later I sat in the sun after having taken a nap in the grass, my back leaned against a rock perfectly placed for lounging. The trees are alive with wind and the flowers wave in the breeze as the stream next to me babbles.

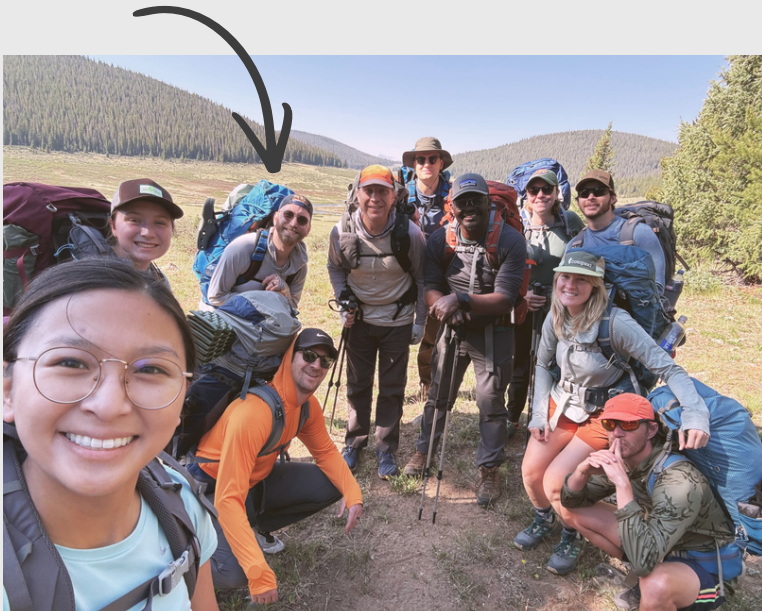
I have no questions left. I have nothing that needs answering, no desire to be anywhere else.

I read a chapter of a book in the sun, the text pondering where God can be found in the wilderness. As I read, a blast of wind smacks me in the face and the papers fly away. I laugh as I chase them across the meadow.

I realize the only thing here feeling any sort of rush is me. God is there, sitting beside me on that rock. He is as still as the stone beneath us, and in time I become still too. That is the closest I ever come to Him. I long to know how to carry that stillness home.

Steve Carlson is NDC's Student Director and one of the leaders of the Creative Writing Group that meets at NDC on the first Thursday of the month. He went on the Wilderness Retreat for the first time in June, and this was his creative response to that experience.

**STEVE IS LOOKING FOR
MORE STUDENT MENTORS!
[INTEREST FORM HERE](#)**



Beyond Our Walls

MISSION AND JUSTICE UPDATES AT NDC

JOSHUA STATION BACKPACK DRIVE

Can you remember walking into school—first day in the fall?

Did you stand tall and confident? Did you swallow hard, with butterflies overwhelming your tummy?

Or maybe you remember seeing your own child off with hope and trepidation, wondering how the day would go?

For the loving Joshua Station parents, sending kids to school with a new backpack, supplies, and items on the teacher's list is a great way to start the year. Donations made through Joshua Station's back-to-school wish list, are a big boost for their learning.

JS's Back To School Drive runs through July 31 and is entirely online through our Amazon Wishlist. Just shop and select Joshua Station BTS Gift Registry Address at checkout to send items directly to us.

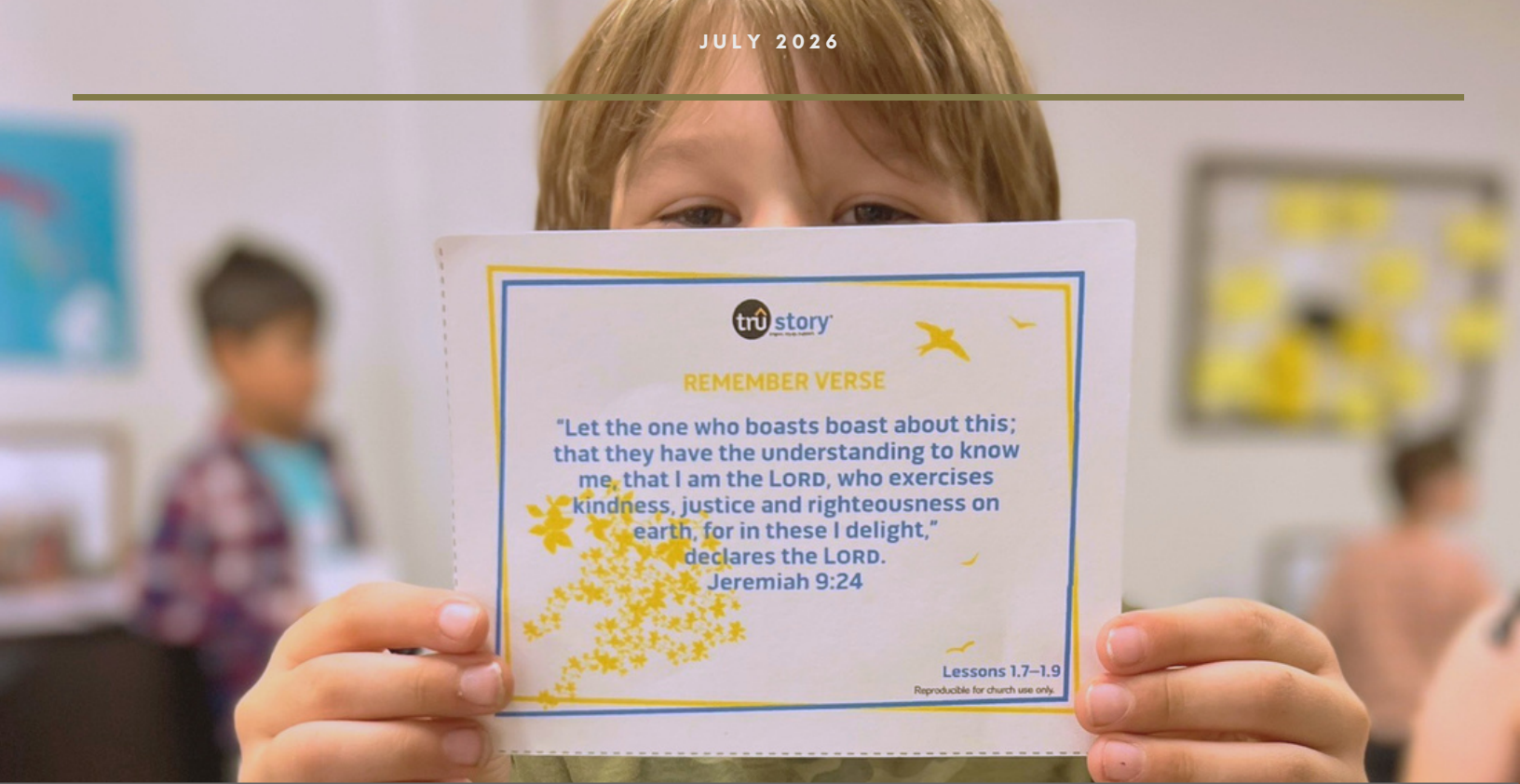
The goal is to fully stock every item on the list, so JS kids can pick out what they like best. Individual options and choices create dignity and identity—key elements of Housing That Heals.

JS families know there is a wonderfully caring community here at NDC rooting for them every step of the way. Your gift reminds the students that they are seen, supported, and surrounded by love. It also supports the parents' highest aspirations for their kids.

“I’ve never learned to read past a fourth grade reading level,” says one Joshua Station parent of a ten-year-old. “It has made life so hard for me. I want more for my son. I want him to do and be better than me.”

At Joshua Station, motivated residents are changing the odds...

- 48% of unhoused youth are chronically absent from school. They have barriers such as frequent school transfers, stigma, transportation, focus in class, proper nutrition, homework, and the struggle to fit in. Joshua Station youth, by contrast, have high attendance.
- Since resource navigation can be difficult for the parents, Joshua Station staff connect families to a wide variety of services within their school districts.
- In addition to staff advocacy, 27% of the youth at Joshua Station are on IEP (Individualized Education Program) and EI (Early Intervention) plans to give them a leg up in their learning.
- In partnership with Whiz Kids, JS has an on-site tutor available for each individual student.
- JS works closely with McKinney-Bento liaisons and organizations such as Highly Mobile Youth services to create fair and equal opportunities for education.
- JS encourages students to try out for sports, join clubs, and nurture friendships—which they are excited to do!



Environment transitions in **ndckids**

At New Denver Church and in NDC Kids, we typically see kids make two big transitions in our environments each year:

- from the **Preschool environment to the Elementary environment**
- from the **Elementary environment (or 5th grade) into our NDC Students program**

FOR ALL NDC KIDS PARENTS:

No need to do anything in Church Center to change your child's grade or age. We can do all that on our end, for everyone, at a specific time! Consider it one less thing for you to think about 😊

For more information on what these transitions look like, visit this [website](#).

**KIDS MISSION &
JUSTICE PRAYER
CALENDAR**

Remember verses

ELEMENTARY

SO GOD RAISED HIM UP TO THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE AND GAVE HIM THE NAME THAT IS GREATER THAN ANY OTHER NAME. GOD DID THIS SO THAT EVERY PERSON WILL BOW DOWN TO HONOR THE NAME OF JESUS.

EVERYONE IN HEAVEN, ON EARTH, AND UNDER THE EARTH WILL BOW. THEY WILL ALL CONFESS, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD," AND THIS WILL BRING GLORY TO GOD THE FATHER.

PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11 (ERV)

PRESCHOOL

HOW YOU MADE ME IS AMAZING AND WONDERFUL. I PRAISE YOU FOR THAT.

PSALM 139:14 (NIRV)

Welcoming Prayer

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

*I welcome everything that comes to me today, because I
know it's for my healing.*

*I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons,
situations, and conditions.*

I let go of my desire for power and control.

*I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval,
and pleasure.*

I let go of my desire for survival and security.

*I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition,
person or myself.*

*I open to the love and presence of God and God's
action within.*

Amen.

--Father Thomas Keating