

# The Bell Tower

February, 2011  
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NEDERLAND COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"The Little Brown Church with the Bell"



**We are a Congregation of**  
Open & welcoming doors  
Open & growing minds  
Open & faithful hearts

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## The Perpetual Paradox

Recently, CNBC ran a fascinating segment on the incredible success of Google.com. Google has developed into what is described as the most successful business in history, and to think it began just 16 years ago with two guys and an idea. It is fascinating to consider how the internet has grown since that time and how each day Google will process over *one billion* search requests.

There was a time not so long ago when I actually used reference books to do my work; commentaries, a Bible concordance, dictionary and thesaurus. But the truth is I seldom use any of them anymore. If I am uncertain of a spelling or word definition, I simply open Google and begin to type as much as I know and within milliseconds, *before I am done typing*, hundreds of thousands of links to possible answers appear on my computer screen. If I want to know the location of some Bible verse; some fact about American history; the speed of sound traveling through water; the number of toes on a lemur's hind foot; or the current weather in Istanbul, I "Google" my question, and in the blink of an eye the answer appears. The internet is convenient, cheap and easy to use, and a real time saver. I can't imagine going back to the days when searching for answers required pulling a huge volume off the book shelf, visiting the library, making a phone inquiry, or digging through dusty file drawers to locate some elusive piece of paper.

But for all its convenience and availability of vast amounts of information, the Internet does have a dark side. Not all information posted on-line is accurate or true, and in the hands of those who are malicious and cruel, the Internet has become an effective means to disseminate hate-filled propaganda, promote lies, and engage in bullying. The Internet is

also used as a tool wielded by creative and cruel hackers, spammers, pornographers, predators and others who seek to fraud, deceive and exploit others for personal gain. Yesterday I received an e-mail from my credit card company, but something just did not seem right. We made a phone call and, sure enough, discovered it was a "phishing" scheme. If I had not been wary, it could have caused some real problems.

Faced with the truth that there is a dark side to the Internet, we hear more and more grumbling from those who believe there should be limits and controls on how the Internet is used, and who may use it. That is an important discussion and we need to pay close attention because the outcome will affect us all, but also because it is our responsibility to voice our concerns.

In a very real way, the Internet has become emblematic of the eternal struggle between good and evil; between wanting to enjoy personal freedom while protecting the vulnerable. It presents a paradox even Google cannot answer. Nor is it anything new. At the time of Jesus, there were predators, hate mongers and thieves who preyed on societies' most vulnerable. He condemned those entrusted with the power that could have been used for good or evil but who.... *"take the front seats in the meeting places and the best seats at banquets ... but cheat widows out of their homes."* (Mk. 12:39)

The evil of injustice is all around us; on the Internet, on Wall Street, in Washington, and around the world. When the power of personal freedom and responsibility to make a difference is abrogated to others, there are always those who will gladly step in to assume it for you. But as people of faith, let us remember we worship God who sent us a brother who was not afraid to speak up when everyone else was quiet; nor was he afraid to question when everyone else just accepted; and who taught us that love of neighbor also means the pursuit of justice. - Peace, Don



Happy Valentine's Day  
February 14





## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Ed & Eleanor Busch	8
Cheryl Wiles & Bill Kocher	27

### **Directory Update:**

Gloria Fraser has moved to an assisted living facility near her son, Steven. Her new address is:

**North Glen Heights**  
**11476 Pearl St.**  
**Northglenn, CO 80233**

Gloria would love to hear from her friends and a good time to reach her is around 7:30pm. (303) 452-0501

### **The Counselor's Corner**

#### **Love, Responsibility and Addiction**

A few years ago a young woman, Sally (not her real name), came into my office and began to talk about her favorite aunt. "When I got that bad perm in middle school she was there to show me how to make it look better. When I wasn't sure if I wanted to go to college or Peru, she helped me decide. When I was positive I'd never talk to my parents again, she listened and gently guided me back home. The problem is my aunt is an alcoholic. Over the years she's tried more rehabs than you can count, more programs than you can remember, and more counselors than you can imagine.

I've learned that I can't will her sober, love her sober, pray her sober, wish her sober, or make her sober. I've read the literature, done research and gone to meetings. I know what enabling is and how to avoid it by setting boundaries. I don't see or talk to her when she's been drinking; I never send her money. Other counselors told me that my boundaries aren't strong enough; I need to cut off all contact until my aunt stops drinking for good. But what if I cut off contact and never see her alive again?"

Sally's story is a familiar narrative I've heard from hundreds of friends and family with a loved one facing addiction. Some stories have happy endings of rehabilitation and recovery; others end in tragedy and heartache. In these difficult and complicated relationships the lesson that continues to reveal itself is this: we can't change anyone else, only ourselves. Together Sally and I discovered what tools were helpful for her, focusing on what she needed to do to keep herself healthy and safe. And although she continues to love and pray for her aunt, wishing one day she will find consistent sobriety, Sally finally believes that she is no longer responsible for her aunt's choices.

**Amy Hartman, MA** - amy@peaktopeakcounseling.com

## February Birthdays

Erik Skeie	4	Barbara Hardt	18
Frank Irwin	5	Pat Everson	20
Lynne James	5	Bobbi McIntosh	20
Donna Collier	6	Judy Hubbard	21
Shannon Lovette	8	John Anderson	23
Bette Ventrella	10	Samantha Harrison	23
Gaylord Morrison	12	Nancy Lawthers	27
Layton Kasch	15		

**In Our Prayers:** Let us pray for God's strength and peace to be present with Bonnie Greenwood upon the death of her aunt Wilda Pease; for Tony Farace upon the death of his uncle and namesake; for Emily Haynes and her family upon the death of her mother, Janet Fish; for Mark Moll and his siblings upon the death of their mother, Margaret Albert. Pray for healing and confidence for Megen Stadele's parents, Cliff and Peggy Johnson as they deal with health issues and for her sister-in-law who has cancer; for Justine Irwin as she undergoes radiation treatment; for Jean Caldwell and Bobbi McIntosh as they continue cancer treatments; for Judy Anderson's brother, Jeff Schulz, recovering from hip surgery; for Crystal Epperson as she prepares for hip surgery; and for Esther Rings recovering from a serious auto accident. An ongoing prayer for a healthy pregnancy for the Brantley's and also for the O'Neill's who are expecting a new grandbaby. Pray for those serving in the military, including, the Lutz' grandson, Keith. Let us remember in prayer those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis; Florence Gruchy, Jane Bauder and Gloria Fraser.

## Recipe of the Month

### **Cranberry Upside-Down Cake**

*From Cinda Kochen*

#### **Ingredients:**

¼ cup butter, melted	¼ tsp. salt
¾ cup brown sugar	½ cup milk
12 oz. fresh cranberries	1 Tbs. vanilla
1 cup sugar	2 eggs
2 tsp. baking powder	½ cup butter, melted
	1 ½ cup flour

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 335 degrees. Melt together brown sugar & butter and pour into baking pan. Sprinkle cranberries over the mixture. Combine Sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir in milk, vanilla, eggs, butter and flour. Pour this batter over cranberries. Bake for 40-50 minutes, or until center starts to cook, then cook at 350 degrees for another 10 minutes until toothpick comes out clean. Alternatively, if using a microwavable pan, cook in microwave 3 minutes take it out and gently even out top of batter and then put it in oven for @ 35 minutes.

## Report of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation

*(Note: If you were unable to attend the annual meeting on Jan. 23 you are welcome to request a copy of the written annual report and 2011 budget by e-mail or paper copy by calling the church or e-mail at [ncpcmail@gmail.com](mailto:ncpcmail@gmail.com)).*

**New Officers:** After thanking our retiring Elders (Kathleen Henningsen, Kathy Brantley and Justine Irwin), and retiring Deacon (Claudia O'Neill) Jim Hubbard presented the following nominations for the class of 2014.

**Elders:** Cinda Kochen, Janet Turnburke and Dennis Whalen. **Deacons:** Barbara Hardt, Michelle Kozel, Liz Preston and Betty Ventrella.

The nominations were passed by unanimous acclamation! We look forward to the leadership of these new church officers.

## Stewardship Campaign Results

At the end of 2010 and into early 2011 a stewardship campaign was conducted. Our goals were twofold: (1) to maintain the level of pledged giving from 2010, in recognition of continued strains in the local and national economies; and (2) to provide our members with an opportunity to participate in the Centennial Celebration of our church by contributing to a fund for renovation of the kitchen.

Recognizing the value we place on participating in the life of our mountain community, our members stepped forward to honor the 100-year anniversary of our church's founding, pledging and donating just over \$20,000 toward the costs of updating our kitchen. The Property Committee of the Session is now proceeding with that good news into the next stage of planning.

At the same time, due largely to demographic changes in the nature of our membership and reflecting the anxieties that go with unstable economic times, our level of Pledged Giving toward the operating expenses of the church declined from 2010.

In planning for the Budget Year 2009, members will recall, Session undertook a major review of our finances, and in the words of our Finance Moderator for that year, "went about wringing every possible spare penny out of the expense budget." To stay as close as possible to a balanced budget for 2010, those stringent restraints were maintained.

Year	Number of pledging units	Amount Pledged
2010	40	\$62,265
2011	32	\$54,410

In anticipation of this coming year, we find our expenses in fixed costs increasing: costs for utilities, taxes and our participation in Presbytery are all up. Accordingly, we have made adjustments in the only areas available for reduction, our programming costs. We are reducing our budget in Office Supplies, in food for Congregational Life, and reflecting the current situation we find ourselves in demographically, we are reducing our budgeting in areas of Youth Ministry. Even with these reductions we conclude our projected Expenses as being slightly higher than they were in 2010, by \$1353.

With the reduction in Pledged Giving, we arrive at a larger anticipated deficit this year over 2010, by \$9209, a total deficit of \$23,692. This is a disappointment for your Session, who has been working successfully for several years to reduce this reliance on the moneys in our savings and investment accounts.

### **The Future**

In 2011 we anticipate the continued scrupulous and attentive management of our financial affairs.

Having reduced our operating budget to what your Session considers a bare minimum to continue viable programming and the life of our church family, it is incumbent on us to begin in a systematic way to respond to the recommendations of past Finance Committees, who have urged the congregation to "ponder, and pray about, the long-term economic health and stability of the church in light of ongoing operating deficits."

Accordingly, Session has authorized the Moderator of the Finance Committee to constitute a working group to begin a review of the goals of our church family and our means of supporting those goals. That Working Group will begin its work immediately.

We have repeatedly demonstrated ourselves to be a church responsive to the needs of our larger community, to rise to challenges as they have presented themselves. In this our Centennial Year we are called to find every way possible to extend the exciting and Spirit-filled work to which we are called.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael O'Neill, Session Moderator, Finance

~ February 2011 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	<b>2</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	<b>3</b> 10:00 Food Pantry	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Presbytery Meeting Scottsbluff, NE
<b>6</b> 9:00 Choir 9:30 Children's Choir 10:00 Worship with Communion	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 1:00 – 3:00 CWS Valentine workshop 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u>	<b>9</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:30 – 11:30 USDA
<b>13</b> 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u>	<b>16</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton 6:30 Session	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u>	<b>23</b> 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	<b>24</b> 10:00 Food Pantry	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School <b>Potluck Luncheon</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potluck luncheon after worship on February 27.</li> <li>• Lenten Book Study begins March 8 – “The Secret Message of Jesus” By Brian McLaren</li> </ul>				



## Nederland Community Presbyterian Church

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