

The Bell Tower

January, 2011
Volume 28, Issue 1

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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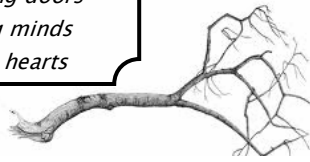
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Stumbling Blocks and Fallen Trees

Pennie and I have enjoyed living with our own private trailhead that begins just out our back door and leads deep into BLM forest land. Over the past few years, we have discovered that Winiger Ridge is laced with old miner and animal trails making it possible for us to choose a hiking route that fits the time we have available for a hike.

Last spring we discovered that the ferocious wind of the previous winter had torn a tree up by its roots and sent it crashing to the ground across one of our main trails (Well, I don't know if it actually "crashed" to the ground; nobody was there to hear the sound of it falling). Since then, the tree has been an annoying impediment to our familiar route, forcing us to slow down, pick our way around or over it, before resuming the pace of a good hike.

Recently, I came across this Robert Frost poem that transformed that tree into a metaphor. Fittingly, it is titled:

"A Tree Fallen Across the Road"

The tree the tempest with a crash of wood
Throws down in front of us is not to bar
Our passage to our journey's end for good,
But just to ask us who we think we are
Insisting always on our own way so.
She likes to halt us in our runner tracks,
And make us get down in a foot of snow
Debating what to do without an ax.

Frost lived in a world of wood and stone. His best metaphors were rooted in the stuff of real New

England life; a stone wall, a fork in the road, fire and ice. As a keen observer of life, he sought meaning and direction for his life in the natural world around him. That led him to maintain a respect for the truth that things happen in life that are beyond our control. The main question for Frost then became, not "why did this happen", but "what am I now to do."

Some say Frost was an atheist, which he denied. Others labeled him an agnostic, meaning he lived, not in denial of God, but in doubt of many of the traditional images and doctrines that create God in the image of man. He described himself as a "free-thinker", which allowed him to live with eyes and ears open to ponder the parables and paradoxes of every day life.

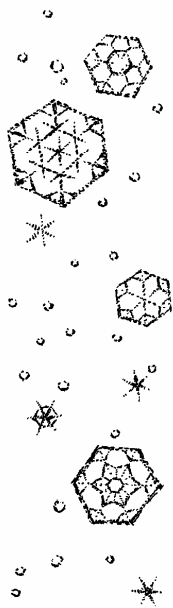
I believe Frost's philosophy is a key to unlocking the mystery of the incarnation. In Jesus Christ, God has revealed to the world that, while life is sometimes painful and difficult, "God is our present help in time of trouble." As a keen observer of life, Jesus taught his disciples that experiences along the journey would teach deeper truths about God's relationship with humanity than the dogmatic religion of his day could ever provide.

Sometimes the answer to what we consider the greatest obstacles in life is to simply forge a new path around them and continue on. God's presence is guaranteed, we are simply asked to remain faithful and place our trust in the promise, that in the end, we shall be safe. Don

Potluck Luncheon and Annual Meeting - January 23

Bring a potluck dish to share and join us on January 23 for the Annual Meeting of the congregation. We will convene the meeting immediately following worship to approve the terms of call for the pastor, elect officers, and receive the approved budget for 2011. Written reports of our Session Committee Moderators will be available to you. The Annual Meeting is also our

opportunity to review the past year and talk about the future, and beyond. Everyone is invited to join us for this important time of fellowship, remembering, and giving thanks — and sharing a delicious potluck luncheon with our church family.



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!**

Stewardship Wrap Up: As we wrap up our stewardship campaign for 2011 here is a gentle reminder if you have not yet returned your pledge card. Your pledge helps our Session as they seek to draft a budget for the upcoming program year.

Thank you!
Michael O'Neill, Moderator

Tuesday Evening Book Study

The Tuesday Evening Book Study group meets each Tuesday evening at 6:30 for a supper of homemade soup and fresh bread. Our discussion begins at 7:00. You are welcome to join us.

Five days before Christmas, the Tuesday Book Study group finished reading and discussing "The First Christmas", by Marcus Borg and John Crossen. This book was not the easiest read, but we found the authors provide some compelling answers to age-old questions about the timeless story of the first Christmas found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. We learned there is a wealth of historical, metaphorical, and theological meanings to be discovered in this simple, child-like story. But perhaps the greatest lesson is that when we move beyond our understandings of childhood, the Christmas story can speak to the very heart of contemporary Christianity.

A new book to begin a New Year!

On January 4, the Tuesday Book Study group will begin the New Year by reading "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time", by Marcus Borg.

As the title suggests, most of us first met Jesus years ago when we were children, but too many of us have carried that childhood image of him right into adulthood. The author suggests that there is much more to the Christian faith than holding onto the images of Jesus we learned in Sunday School, or in doctrinal positions passed down to us through the historical church. For Borg, the key to a growing and vital faith is to "*meet Jesus again, as if for the first time.*"

If the Christian life is a journey that leads to personal transformation, we must be a people on the move. We must be willing to loosen our grip on the past and ready to commit to a journey into God's future, which we see revealed in the life of the one we call Lord of Life.

If you are interested in joining us for this adventure, you may purchase "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time" by Marcus Borg from Amazon.com for about \$10.00.

Venite Adoremus Dominum

"Come, let us adore the Lord"

It took every folding chair we own, set up in the aisles, to attempt to seat everyone who showed up for our Christmas Eve worship service this year. But even with the extra seating, there remained a number of folks who found standing room only. We suspect that much of the unexpected surge in attendance was in response to the ads which Barbara Hardt placed for us in the "Mountain Ear" each of the three weeks leading up to Christmas Eve. For that we are most grateful. But such response to the ad means there are many people seeking a spiritual connection to something greater than them. This is the role of religion; it is our calling and our purpose to be mediators of the sacred. People are hungry; we are simply asked to extend the invitation and tell the ancient stories and allow God to do the rest. Invite a friend to church.

Mountain Community

Music and Arts Association



Did you know that since MCMAA began in June of 2005, we have organized 41 concerts? Many of those concerts involved our beautiful Charles Walter piano, which remains at the heart of our summer concert series. We have hosted an eclectic mix of music, from American bluegrass, barbershop and folk, to world music from Africa, Ireland and Sweden and classical to jazz. We've enjoyed the talent of local musicians, children and the Nederland High School choir and organized several benefit concerts. Our relationship with CU Boulder has brought us some of the finest talent around, including *Opus Two*, a professional touring duo. Receptions are hosted by various organizations and businesses in town, and we have enjoyed the partnership with *The Palette Gallery of Nederland*. This year, we were honored to receive donations for the series from Ellen Andersen, Jim Elder, Pat Everson, and the Dexter's. Each year our concerts have grown in number and our musicians tell us they love the venue and our audiences.

It is time to begin planning for Summer 2011!

----- If you would like to be part of the MCMAA Steering Committee, or have suggestions of ways to enhance our concert experiences, please let us know.

-----We would also love to hear from businesses or organizations who would like to underwrite or sponsor a concert, or host a reception.

Check out www.mcmaa.org, or call 303-642-7227

In our prayers: Let us pray for God's strength and peace to be present with Tony Farace upon the death of his uncle and namesake, and for Bonnie Greenwood grieving the death of her aunt, Wilda Pease. Continue to pray for Emily Haynes and her family upon the death of her mother, Janet Fish; for Mark Molt and his siblings grieving the death of his mother, Margaret Albert; and for Charlie and the Allen family who suffer the loss of their father, John. Offer prayers of strength and comfort for Megan Stadle's parents: Cliff Johnson, currently in the hospital and Peggy, who has been in the hospital several times in the last few months; also prayers for her sister-in-law dealing with the death of Megan's brother. Ongoing prayers are needed for healing and confidence for Justine Irwin for continued health concerns and recent biopsy; for Crystal Epperson expecting hip surgery; for Jean Caldwell and Bobbi McIntosh as they undergo cancer treatments; for the continued healing of Esther Rings recovering from a serious auto accident; for a healthy pregnancy for the Brantley's and for the O'Neill's who are expecting a new grandbaby; and remember those serving in the military, including, the Lutz's grandson, Keith. As always, let us pray for those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis, including Florence Gruchy, Jane Bauder and Gloria Fraser.

The Counselor's Corner — *Lost and Found*

After my mother died, I was surprised to find a small bell sewn to a button in her jewelry box. I had never seen the bell before in my adult life, but immediately recognized it. I remember Mother telling me she used to put it in the buttonhole of my woolen maroon coat so she could hear me if I wandered off while shopping. The funny thing about the bell was that I never knew I had the potential of being lost; I only remember its jingle as I skipped through the Five & Dime.

Thinking about the potential for being lost raised two questions for me.

1. Do we need self-awareness to be lost? Certainly, my keys do not recognize when they've gone astray, yet their absence profoundly affects me and anyone I'm scheduled to meet. So are my keys really lost if they don't have a sense of missingness? As humans, being lost is not something that happens in isolation. There is a relational ingredient ...a "we" or an "us-factor". Someone notices we are not around, off track, distracted or otherwise *not present*. The question becomes, can we be found if we won't entertain the idea that we were lost in the first place?

Choir Notes:

If you were unable to attend worship on December 19th, you missed hearing the Choir's special Christmas music this year. All is not lost, because Ben Brantley was good enough to record the worship service and has posted the choir's anthems for that day on the web. The recording says it all; we may be small in number but we have lots of spirit! Have a listen at: <http://lpxel4.net/npc/music>

Choir Rehearsal Schedule:

In January we move into our once-a-month rehearsal schedule for the next few months. This month we will rehearse on **January 5, at 6:30.**

This is the perfect time for those interested in giving choir a chance to join us for a fun evening of making music together.

Recipe of the Month: Granny's Apple Salad - Justine Irwin

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 cup mayonnaise | 2 ribs of celery, finely diced |
| Juice of 1 lemon | 1 cup red, seedless grapes halved |
| 1 handful Craisins | 1 handful coarsely chopped pecans |
| 3 large, firm Granny Smith apples (cored and diced medium) | |

Directions: In a large bowl, mix mayonnaise and lemon juice together. Add remaining ingredients, stirring after each addition. Stir well. Cover and chill. If salad is too tart, add 1 tbsp. honey to dressing and stir in thoroughly before serving.

Food Pantry and USA Food Distribution

For many years, our church has been home to the Nederland Food Pantry and the USDA Food Distribution, which makes much needed food available to members of our community.

These quiet, ongoing ministries are made possible by a small but dedicated group of organizers and helpers. If you would like to know how you can help, you may contact Judy Anderson or Justine Irwin.

Remember: You are encouraged to bring donations for the food pantry to worship with you on the first Sunday of each month.

2. What if we recognize we're lost, but no one else knows it? If something is amiss in our life: there is emptiness, loneliness, disconnectedness ...the *ME* in *me* has vanished. How do we find our way back without the help of a search party?

I do think that we can be in a state of missingness without awareness; and we can be lost even if no one else is looking for us. Each type of missingness is relational and affects the quality of life, yet the absence may only be realized in hindsight ...perhaps only at the moment of being found. There was a time in my life when I lost my way, and didn't know it. I'm glad there was a "search party" and that I finally heard the bell jingle. Pennie Dexter, PhD – PDexter@Keystonecounseling.net

January 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*Jan. 23 - Pot Luck Luncheon and Annual Meeting of the Congregation						1. <i>Happy</i> NEW YEAR
2 9:00 Choir 10:00 - Worship with Communion	3	4 3:45-5:00 Karplus 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study week 1 "Meeting Jesus Again"	5 9:30 Painting Group 3:45 - 5:00 Karplus 5:00 - 6:30 Tipton 6:30 - Choir	6 10:00 Food Pantry	7	8 9:30 - USDA / Food Pantry
9 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Ch. School	10	11 1:00 CWS 3:45-5:00 Karplus 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	12 9:30 Painting Group 3:45 - 5:00 Karplus 5:00 - 6:30 Tipton	13	14	15
16 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Ch. School (MLK Weekend)	17	18 3:45-5:00 Karplus 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	19 9:30 Painting Group 3:45 - 5:00 Karplus 5:00 - 6:30 Tipton	20 6:30 Session Meets	21	22
23 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Ch. School *Annual Meeting and *Pot Luck	24	25 3:45-5:00 Karplus 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	26 9:30 Painting Group 3:45 - 5:00 Karplus 5:00 - 6:30 Tipton	27 10:00 Food Pantry	28	29
30 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Ch. School	31	JANUARY BIRTHDAYS Ann Runyan 5 Aimee Tomlinson 11 Dorothy Whalen 15 Barbara Hardt 18 Kylie Vercelli 24		JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES Claudia & Michael O'Neill 11 Doug & Joyce Trostle 29		



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