

The Bell Tower

March, 2011
Volume 28, Issue 3

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

P.O. Box 467, 210 Jefferson Street, Nederland, CO 80466
(303) 258-3579
www.nederlandcpc.org

Inside this Issue:

Page 2

Shrove Tuesday
Book Study
Note From Session
New Address

Page 3

Baby Shower
Counselor's Corner
Choir Notes
Prayer Requests

Page 4

Calendar

Learning to See God in the Midst of Life

DAYLIGHT
SAVINGS
TIME



MARCH
13TH

Our Tuesday Evening Book Study group has been meeting now every week for nearly a year. During that time we have been on a journey that has informed, challenged and confronted the traditional faith of our fathers and mothers, which they once inherited and have now passed on to us. This traditional Christianity is centered in, and defined by a particular way of reading the Bible that emphasizes biblical infallibility, historical factuality, and moral and doctrinal absolutes. Early on, the study group discovered we shared something in common. Each of us has been living with questions about traditional Christian beliefs that we have never asked because we were taught that questions are a sign of weakness of faith; and we know we are not alone. Rather than serving as a pathway to God, the church, with its emphasis on "belief", has actually become a stumbling block for millions of people.

Anyone associated with American Christian churches during the past few decades has seen signs that we are in the midst of great change; some say "a second reformation". One obvious sign is how every mainline protestant denomination has experienced a steady decline in membership and worship attendance since the middle of the last century. But a more obvious sign, one that is most often misunderstood and even ignored, is the mantra used by more and more people who remain outside the church: "*I am spiritual, but not religious.*" Those words should tell us something very important, but not about them. They say something about us.

Last month Pennie and I attended a conference in Phoenix, which was designed to be an intentional meeting of traditional Christianity and what some are calling the "emerging church". This "emerging

church" movement consists of some who remain within the institutional church, but in recent years there has been significant growth in non-denominational house churches; small groups of men and women who gather to experience and talk about their Christian faith, not in terms of "beliefs", but by how they live their lives. Their love of God is demonstrated in how they put faith into practice for the sake of God's beauty, justice and love. They talk, strangely enough, about the desire to live their daily lives in the "way of Jesus".

In her recent book, *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes about "practicing faith" in ways that extend far beyond the walls of the institutional church, to include practices that frame everyday human experience. She talks about learning to see the divine in all things and invites her readers to look for, and participate in, the sacredness of every day life. The book serves as an inspiration for Christians of every stripe who are uncomfortable, unmoved and even bored with "religion", not wanting to leave theological reflection up to theologians, or relegating spirituality to Sunday morning worship. She encourages us as readers to think theologically about our bodies, the ground on which we walk, the laundry that we do, even the air we breathe as having the potential of a "spiritual but not religious" experience with the God of Creation. Marcus Borg writes: "Elegant, wise, and insightful, this book is also sacramental: it mediates the life it describes." I encourage you to join our book study during the Season of Lent as we read Barbara Brown Taylor's book together. It can be a time to think deeply about our faith journey and our relationship with God, who is with us always in the midst of every day life. - Don



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Pancakes for Supper? The tradition of eating pancakes for supper on Shrove Tuesday was a way to use up eggs and fat in preparation of the Lenten fast.

Shrove Tuesday was intended to be a time of **food** and **fun** before the beginning of a more disciplined Season of Lent.

So, bring a friend and join us on Shrove Tuesday, March 8, as we feast on a pancake supper...*That's the food.*

A Bottle Band!! After supper, we will entertain ourselves by learning to play in an honest-to-goodness bottle band. If you can make a sound blowing across the top of a bottle, that is the only skill you need. *That's the fun part*, and it will be a whole lot of it!!



Figure 29.1

LENTEN BOOK STUDY

“An Altar in the World – A Geography of Faith”
by Barbara Brown Taylor

**Begins Tuesday
March 15, 6:30**



Christian author, Phillis Tickle, writes of this New York Times bestseller, *“An Altar in the World is the most completely beautiful book in religion that I have read in a very long time. Gentle, humbly crafted, lyrical, and deeply wise, Barbara Brown Taylor is a pastor who understands that knowing God occurs in a place beyond theology.”*

You are invited to join the Lenten Tuesday Book Study group as we read and discuss this insightful and practical book about experiencing the presence of God in the most mundane of human endeavors. Through Taylor's expert guidance and delicate, thought-provoking prose, her readers learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and practice reverence.

The book study will meet each Tuesday at 6:30, beginning March 15, for a soup supper, followed by a 7:00-8:00pm discussion of the assigned reading for the week.

You may request a book by signing up after worship, by phone (303-642-7227), or e-mail: dexinned@gmail.com by March 6. The cost will be \$10. Books are also available at Amazon.com or local bookstores.

Where are we going?

In January of each year we do a review of who we are as a church family, enjoying success stories from the last year and thinking about what we'll do this year.

At our annual meeting we had many reasons to celebrate, from the quality of the pastoral leadership we enjoy to the talents of our members, from the music on Sundays to the specialness of our holiday worship. We learned of exciting things that are happening in our Christian Education program and our successes in mission work with our community.

The year was marked by excellent management of our resources. We were frugal when it counted, and our members, visitors and guests were generous.

Looking to the coming year we learned that changing demographics and challenging economic times pose new opportunities for us this year. Our pledging for this year was down and fixed costs are up, and with program budgets already at minimal levels there was nothing left to cut.

One option during a time like this is to the search for further economies, cutting further into the substance of who we are. Yet that is not the only, nor necessarily the best, option. Perhaps this is a call for us to unleash our creativity, to open ourselves to the movement of Spirit to hear how we might rise to the challenges of changing times.

We are mountain people, resilient and courageous, undaunted by events that seem to be not going our way. The splendid sanctuary we worship in is testament to that spirit, built in times more challenging than those we face today. Earlier generations have given us a history of inspiration, a solid base to support us in our place in our mountain community, our state and our world.

Now the time is ours. I wonder where we will be guided to go to go. - Michael O'Neill, Session Elder

New Address for Gloria Fraser

Dear Friends,

I hope you will please pass the word to all Gloria Fraser's friends there at Ned Pres. She is currently residing at Union Court Assisted Living, 7587 Union Court, Arvada, CO 80005. Her phone is: 303-456-4485.

We moved her there because she is in need of a little more loving care than was offered her before at Northglenn. She is receiving calls, and visits and you are welcome to mail cards or letters to her too. I am sorry I'm not able to answer all the calls I've received regarding her move - I hope you will all feel comfortable contacting her at her new residence. Many thanks to all - especially her friends with the CWS group.

Mandy Fraser Burnham (Gloria's daughter).

Brantley Baby Shower:

Please join us as we "Monkey Around" (nursery theme is monkeys) to celebrate Kathy and Ben Brantley's upcoming baby's birth. As friends, we will gather right after worship in fellowship hall for some games, music and hearty appetizers. Join us for worship at 10 and stay for the Brantley baby celebration follows at 11:15.



If you'd like to give a shower gift, we will have a money tree or the Brantley's are registered at: www.amazon.com/gp/registry/baby/39VG1YHQC6O1M. Kathy has requested that you not give gifts that are battery operated and make loud noise (except what they may have listed on their registry page), as some sounds are problematic for her due to the stroke. If you can't attend, but would like to send a gift or card you can mail it c/o Don & Pennie Dexter, 237 Aspen Way, Nederland, CO.

Please let us know if you plan to attend, by responding in any of these ways: Contact Cinda Kochen or the Dexters by e-mail (prdexter@gmail.com), or by phone (303-642-7227)

Counselor's Corner

Loss and Transformation

Returning from California in November, we came across an old cottonwood tree isolated on the road near Middlegate, Nevada. The tree's huge 70-foot stature was literally overflowing with old sneakers and other tied foot attire. Local lore about the origins of this *Shoe Tree* involved a young couple's marriage-night tiff, which ended with the groom throwing his bride's shoes up in the tree. Years after that quarrel, the couple returned to add their firstborn's shoes to the ornamentation. The rest is history.

Whatever the facts of the lore, the result was an awesome site. A recent web search for the tree informed me that vandals cut down the healthy 50 year-old cottonwood on December 30. The people of Middlegate said, "Why would someone cut down our only hero?" Locals are now considering erecting a bronze statue of a tree; one that may invite new shoes to be tossed and will be invincible to senseless vandals.

I was perplexed by my reaction to the vandalism. First I denied the possibility, then felt anger, and finally sadness. I'm not really certain why I had these feelings of mourning. I can't say I had numerous memories of the tree like some people on the web reported, but somehow my simple happenstance with the tree made me feel akin to it. Perhaps

CHOIR NOTES

We often hear compliments from the congregation about the choir's musical offerings on Sunday mornings and some say it is a shame more people are not able to enjoy their music. So, Ben Brantley has been good enough to post several choir anthems online at: <http://pixel4.net/ncpc/music>. Recently our choir was asked to provide special music for the Meeker Society Dinner at Highlands Camp and Conference center on March 13th! Way to go.



- Rehearsal – March 7 at 6:30 (soup supper at 6:15)

- Mt. Meeker Society Dinner – March 13 at 4:00. (We will leave the church at 3:20.)

By the way... if you ever have a hankering to give choir a try, you are welcome to do so. Just speak with Don.

In Our Prayers: We offer continued prayers for all those who mourn the loss of loved ones; prayers for healing and confidence for Justine Irwin as she undergoes radiation treatment; for Jean Caldwell and Bobbi McIntosh as they continue cancer treatments; and for those anticipating or recovering from surgery including Judy Anderson's brother, Jeff Schulz; Crystal Epperson and Esther Rings. Offer ongoing prayers for a healthy pregnancy for the Brantley's and for the O'Neill's grandbaby. Pray for those serving in the military, including the Lutz' grandson, Keith. As always remember in prayer those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis, including Florence Gruchy, Jane Bauder and Gloria Fraser.

this kinship arose from the tree's uniqueness; perhaps because it stood so majestically with a sense of connection, yet estrangement; or perhaps because a tree is an ancient metaphor for life itself.

I don't know why I mourned, but I do know that when we experience senseless loss; when somehow an illusion or a dream is taken away; the natural reaction is to suffer and mourn. I also know that we cannot heal from that loss when consumed by bitterness or disillusionment. Victor Frankl once said, "When we are no longer able to change a situation...we are challenged to change ourselves." In the end, the goal may be to understand what will reform and transform what we've experienced as loss. For me, I'm glad I had the opportunity to experience the tree.

Pennie Dexter, PhD ~ PDexter@KeystoneCounseling.net

~ March 2011 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	3 10:00 Food Pantry	4	5
6 9:00 Choir 9:30 Children's Choir 10:00 Worship with Communion	7 Choir Practice 6:30	8 1:00pm CWS 6:30 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	9 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	10	11	12 9:30 – 11:30 USDA and Food Pantry
13 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School Choir – Meeker Society Dinner at Highlands Camp	14	15 Lenten Book Study 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	16 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	17 6:30 Session	18	19
20 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School Potluck Luncheon following worship	21	22 Lenten Book Study 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	23 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	24	25	26
27 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:30 Church School 11:15 Brantley Baby Shower	28	29 Lenten Book Study 6:30 Soup Supper 7:00 Book Study	30 3:34-5:00 <u>Karplus</u> 5:00-6:30 Tipton	31 10:00 Food Pantry	Notes:	



Nederland Community Presbyterian Church

P.O. Box 467
210 Jefferson St.
Nederland, CO 80466

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please notify us at (303) 258-3579, or the address listed above.