

# The Bell Tower

October, 2011  
Volume 28, Issue 10

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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## **Embrace the Mystery...and Expedition Behavior**

— Gary Ennor, Session Clerk

One of the definitions of coincidence in the American Heritage Dictionary is *a sequence of events that although accidental seems to have been planned or arranged*.

In September, the lectionary readings from the Old Testament included passages from Exodus 12, 14, 16 and 17. The sermons crafted around these lectionary readings pointed to the similarities of the predicament of the Hebrew people to our circumstance at Nederland Community Presbyterian Church. The readings all deal with a people removed from familiar conditions who find themselves in a wilderness of the unfamiliar.

Is this just a coincidence? Or, just good timing in the order of the lectionary? Hmmm.

In his sermon on September 11, Dan Saperstein, our Executive Presbyter, noted that Exodus 16:1-15 occurs shortly after the Hebrews pass through the Red Sea. This is a period in which the freed Hebrew slaves begin to think this was not such a good idea.

Dan pointed out that *complaining, murmuring, whining is a natural response to unknown...situations*. Sometimes with change comes a fear of the future. As people, we have a strong drive for security and certainty.

He quoted from a sermon of Dr. M. Craig Barnes, the pastor of The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, delivered on Sunday, September 9, 2001, just two days before those horrific events that are indelibly etched into our memories.

*Notice how many times the word Egypt comes up in those verses. No one is talking about the Promised Land, freedom, or the Lord. All they are talking about is what they left behind. That's because they are scared, and when people are scared they will always trade in their freedom for security.*

*So let us be clear: when God opens up the Red Sea to allow the Hebrews to walk away from Pharaoh and slavery, it is not because he is moved by their great faith. They have no faith! That's what they will learn in the desert. At this point all they have is fear, which the Bible understands as the opposite of faith.*

The next paragraph in Dr. Barnes' sermon begins with this statement: *When people become fearful, they always prefer the misery they know to the mystery they do not.*

Take a moment and reflect on that statement. We prefer the known over the mystery of the unknown.

Two weeks after Dan's sermon, Maria Shupe, the Executive Director of Highlands, gave us some great tips for our journey. She recounted a birthday gift she gave herself. She spent 23 days backpacking in the wilderness in a program offered by the National Outdoor Leadership School. Maria said that anyone who has taken a NOLS course has heard the term "expedition behavior," the title of her sermon. In fact, *expedition behavior may be the most important thing a student learns*.

Like the Hebrews of the Old Testament, we at NCPC are on an expedition—an expedition to discover who we are as a people of God, to rediscover our call to ministry as a congregation, and to reveal our leadership needs to answer that call faithfully and authentically.

Unlike the ancient Hebrews, we are not faced with questions such as "Are we going to die here?" or "Is God with us or not?" Yet we may question the direction we seem to be going, grumble about how long it is taking, or complain that the leadership could be doing more.

Maria noted that the principles of expedition behavior are transferable to everyday life. They are:

- Serve the mission and goals of the group.
- Be as concerned for others as you are for yourself.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Support leadership and growth in everyone.
- Respect the cultures you contact.
- Be kind and open-hearted.
- Do your share and stay organized.
- Help others, but don't routinely do their work.
- Model integrity by being honest and accountable.
- Admit and correct your mistakes.

Let's embrace the *mystery* of this time of change and transition. Let's learn and practice expedition behavior together.

### The Calendar Turns...a Stewardship Moment

— Michael O'Neill, For the Finance Committee

With the extravagant show of autumn leaves now in its full glory, we are reminded of the turning of the earth and the turning of the year. We're checking our firewood supplies, planting last-minute daffodils, finishing up that summer project list. We know the time of winter rest is coming.

This is also the time of year we review where we've been as a church family, and begin thinking of where we want to be going. In coming weeks and before the busyness of holiday season arrives, we'll be making our way through our gentle season of stewardship.

Ours is a quiet stewardship campaign. We spend a few Sundays hearing from each other about the personal meanings of stewardship, reminding us of the value of our church family in our lives. We send out pledge cards. We ask you to prayerfully consider your level of support of who we are, what we represent in our community and in our world.

Please know as we move ahead this year that our needs in this transition time are particularly acute. It's a time for us to draw together and recommit to being a part of our 100-year-old tradition. We look forward to this stewardship time with you, and hope you will be generous in your sharing of your energies, your creativity, your time and your resources.

### News from our Extended Family

— Michael O'Neill [oneill543@msn.com](mailto:oneill543@msn.com)

Our mountains are ablaze these days with the final show of the seasonal year, the turning of the aspens. If you're with us in the summer season and have already returned to your first home, we think of you and wish you were here to enjoy the colors.

We know that your home is also in the same season, and no doubt you are surrounded by your own world of beauty. Perhaps in your busy lives you are scarcely aware of your friends in the mountains.

We'd love to hear from you, to learn how things are going as you resettle after your time with us. When the spirit moves you, perhaps you'll take a moment to drop us a line. If you don't have an address for one of us, use the Contact Us page on the church website: <http://www.nederlandcpc.org>.

Or drop me a line personally. We'd love to share in the Newsletter here what's happening in your life while you're away from us. You are an important part of who we are as a church family, and we are grateful that you share your summer weeks and months with us.

### OUR NEW CUSTODIAN

— Frank Lutz, Property Elder

Many of you may already know John Callahan. He has lived in Coal Creek since 1971. He is a quiet man who you have probably seen driving around Nederland in his older red Subaru with his constant companion, his black and white border collie mix called Buckeye. But being a quiet person, you may not know much about him. Let me introduce him to you.

John was born in Lakewood, Ohio and attended The Ohio State University, where he received his B.S. in journalism. He then moved to Miami, Florida where he took a job in the Miami Herald's sports department and worked for several years. But, although he loved sports and still does, he couldn't take the heat and humidity. So he moved to Coal Creek where he still resides. He worked for several years for agencies dealing with adults with developmental disabilities. He continues to be involved in those efforts, volunteering in Adult Special Olympic events.

John is an indispensable volunteer for the Nederland Food Pantry. I met him as I exercised with the NAS in the basement of St. Rita's. He exercises hauling food carts up and down the ramp into the church storage area and out again to NCP shelves for distribution. He works a shift for the Carousel of Happiness and when he can fit it into his busy schedule, he helps out with a shift for the Nederland Historical Society. He has been taking care of the custodial jobs for us since the first of the month when Michael Dexter had to leave us for his new and exciting job with the gold mine. John stepped right in and is doing a great job. So, if you see a new guy working in and around the church, followed by a cute border collie, that's John—stop and say hello.

### Time for Our Children

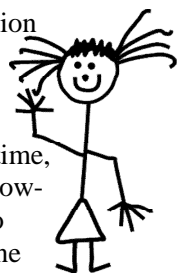
Like most children, those in our congregation are curious, adventuresome, and vulnerable. They need the eyes of all of us looking out for them.

After worship is an especially worrisome time, as the distraction of conversation during fellowship allows kids to slip away unsupervised to the creek. We all assume that there is someone else watching them, but that is not always the case.

I'm asking everyone to be aware if they notice a child outside unsupervised. The creek is a fun and healthy place for them to explore, as long as there is someone watching them. If you do have children, make sure to pick them up right after church is over or to get a guarantee that there is adult supervision outside.

Our children are most precious; they need our love, attention, and supervision.

— Cinda Kochen, Christian Education



**Transition Team Report**

At its September meeting, Session approved a search for an interim pastor and appointed Frank Lutz, Michael O’Neill and Dennis Whalen to the search committee. Session will review and evaluate church finances to determine what is prudent to undertake within our present budget obligations.

**The Interim Pastor** — An interim pastor is recognized as a specialized position in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Presbyteries increasingly encourage sessions to hire an interim while the congregation is in transition between called pastors.

An Interim Pastor has a special temporary relationship with the church. This is an individual specifically trained to help churches in transition between one pastor and the next.

Interim Pastors understand the dynamics of a congregation in transition, including feelings of grief, loss, and, sometimes, relief or anger.

This pastor’s mission is to promote congregational health and vitality through the challenges associated with the transition period that ultimately result in calling a new permanent pastor. In our Presbytery, an Interim Pastor is not permitted to become our next called Pastor.

In addition to serving as a bridge between permanent pastors, the interim supplies the congregation as follows:

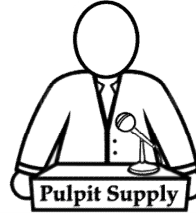
- Worship leadership and preaching
- Pastoral care
- Work with the session to provide for the life and ministry of the congregation
- Work with the session to provide for continuity of essential programs, and may assist the session in assessing needs for changes in programs and ministries of the congregation.
- Administrative work
- Support for programs and committees of the congregation

Until an interim pastor is hired, our ministry will continue. Qualified people will provide leadership to our worship services. Many of the normal church duties will continue under the leadership of the elders and congregational care will continue under the leadership of our deacons.

This transition period is an opportunity for us to reflect on who we are Christian community, where God is calling us to focus our mission, and what leadership we need to call to help us to effectively serve the mission of the congregation.

It is the congregation’s job to review, and if necessary, modify and augment its mission, vision and values. The congregation will then elect a pastor search committee. It will be charged with finding a pastor with the skills the congregation wants to meet its mission.

The following supply preachers have been engaged to worship with us on the dates noted.



- Oct 9 Rev. Katie Palmer
- Oct 16 Maria Shupe, CCE
- Oct 23 Rev. Katie Palmer
- Oct 30 Rev. Dr. Joanne Dobie
- Nov 6 Rev. Bruce McQueen

Please introduce yourself and welcome them to our church. Each will be driving a good distance to help with and participate in our worship service. We greatly appreciate their willingness to support our church during this transitional period.



*Happy Anniversary!*  
**OCTOBER**

- 13 Kevin & Michelle Kozel
- 26 Jim & Judy Hubbard



**OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS**

- Sue Hubert 1
- Crystal Skeie 7
- Dennon Jones 8
- Bob Rhoads 14
- Amy Hoffman 15
- Kevin Kozel 15
- Alexandra "Ali" Mills 15
- Jack Filer 18
- Jeremy Tomlinson 19
- Gwen Burak 20
- Shirley Filer 21
- Dan Burak 22
- Michelle Vercelli 26
- John Stinton 27

**Community Service\***

\* Your church community needs nominees from its membership to serve as ruling elder on the Session. There is one opening for the elder class of 2015 and an opening to fill the remaining term for the class of 2013 (a one year commitment).

Isn't it time for you to step forward? *You know it is.*

**Your Session Elders**

- Carolyn Armstrong Worship\*
- Gary Ennor Session Clerk/Transition Team
- Cinda Kochen Christian Education
- Frank Lutz Property/Transition Team
- Michael O’Neill Finance
- Janet Turnburke Fellowship
- Dennis Whalen Mission

\* This position will become vacant on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Contact a Session elder to learn about the position. Consider helping out with the worship service—even if just for the rest of this year. November and December present many opportunities to serve.

~ October 2011 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 Worship Service and Communion with Rev. Dr. Joanne Dobie 10:30 Church School	3	4	5 3:30 – 5:00 Karplus	6 10:00 Food Pantry	7	8 9:30 – 11:00 USDA Distribution and Food Pantry
9 10:00 Worship Service with Rev. Katie Palmer 10:30 Church School	10	11	12 3:30 – 5:00 Karplus	13 <i>Tentative (at press time)</i> 8:30 – 4:00 Town of Nederland Board Retreat Fellowship Hall	14	15
16 10:00 Worship Service with Maria Shupe 10:30 Church School <b>Potluck!</b>	17	18	19 3:30 – 5:00 Karplus	20 6:30 Session meets in Fellowship Hall	21	22
23 10:00 Worship Service with Rev. Katie Palmer 10:30 Church School	24	25 November Newsletter Deadline	26 3:30 – 5:00 Karplus	27 10:00 Food Pantry	28 Presbytery Meeting Westminster Presbyterian Church Ft. Collins Begins 2 pm	29 Presbytery Meeting Westminster Presbyterian Church Ft. Collins Ends at Noon
30 10:00 Worship Service with Rev. Dr. Joanne Dobie 10:30 Church School	31 	<b>Notes:</b>  <p>“Elk...does an excellent job of providing for his family, but he forgets about Community. And left to his own devices he will let Community die. So that when he needs the Community—and <u>he will</u>, sooner or later—there may be no Community there to help him.”                      — Paula Underwood, <i>Turtle Woman Singing</i>                      (Wisdom from an American Indian Elder)</p>				

**Potluck Lunch — October 16**  
 Following the worship service  
 Bring a dish to share...but if you forget, bring yourself.  
 There's always plenty to spare and share.



**Reminder** — Advent begins **Sunday, November 27**. Mark your calendar now! This is the Sunday of our traditional potluck followed by trimming the Christmas tree and hanging Christmas roping.  
**Also**, NCPC will host a community Christmas caroling event by the **Peak to Peak Chorale** on either December 3 (afternoon) or 9 (evening), the date to be confirmed soon—followed by a dessert reception. Yummy! **Be there!**

