

Cross Currents

Newsletter of the Haydenville Congregational Church
April 2010 *Open Hearts & Open Minds & Open Doors*

FROM THE PASTOR

My college boyfriend and I rode a tandem bicycle together for years. Among other glorious trips, we cycled down the Outer Banks of North Carolina and along the Blue Ridge Parkway in the Appalachian Mountains. I was the one on the back of bike and so I had to give up control—my fixed handlebars did not let me steer! I just pedaled and enjoyed the scenery (I think I did have a brake!). The tandem is a big bike, plus we wore reflective vests and blinking lights on our helmets—we were unmissable! However we were missed. Despite how carefully we rode and how safety conscious we were, we had several close calls with cars and trucks and we wondered: how could the drivers not see us? I know that cyclists are injured every year because drivers claim *they simply did not see them*. And I wonder how this could be. How can you not see something that is right in front of you?

As we move into our post-Easter liturgical season, I invite us to see that which is right in front of us—a living, breathing God manifest in those in our Church family and in the wider community. The tomb was empty and now Jesus lives in all of us—we are doing God's work through our hands, feet, voices, and actions. The tomb was empty so our lives could be full, and we continue the work that Jesus began when he walked in ancient lands preaching, teaching and healing the sick. God's good work continues to be done by all of us—That work is evident in the loving hands of those in our Church who bring meals to shut-ins, visit those

who are lonely, pray with those who are in crisis, sing in nursing homes, care for our Church's children, speak out for justice, and work for peace. Jesus is in and among us. Can you not see him? Look into the eyes of the parishioner sitting next to you in the pew at Church, working with you on a committee, washing dishes in the kitchen, cataloguing books in the church library, walking the labyrinth, sharing an insight in a book group discussion, and building shelves in the new Treasurer's office—look into the eyes of our Church members and friends and see what is right in front of you. We are the body of Christ. We are the only hands and voices God has now on earth. Look and see what is there in front of you—a spark of the divine, a child of God, a contemporary disciple of the living Christ.

The Book of Isaiah tells us, "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 43:18-19. WE are the new thing springing forth! We are part of the body of Christ. Christ was living, then killed on the cross, then he appeared to those who loved and followed him. He is alive and living in this world still. God is

doing a new thing—in and through us. We are the continuing story of a "still speaking God." We are doing God's work in this beautiful and broken world. Let us see what is right in front of us...the risen Christ in our midst, in each other and in ourselves.

Love and Blessings,



NOTE FROM MATILDA

Children's Church and Youth and Family Ministries

Haydenville Youth Group: Group Member Profile #2

Starting last month, we began featuring a profile of each of the members of our Youth Group in the newsletter. Please read and enjoy, and introduce yourself to Jon if you have not met already!



Youth: Jonathan Roberge

Grade and School: 7th Grade, Hampshire Regional

Nickname: Jon

Family members: Mom, dad, sister, brother, and nieces.

Hobbies: Soccer, video games, cooking, snowboarding, fishing, and taking cruises. Also loves a certain team from Boston.

The thing that makes Jon laugh the hardest: "Watching LOL cat videos on Youtube"

My hope for the World: "People will all help each other more."

Favorite thing about Haydenville: Children's Church/Joys and Concerns

More about Jon: I have known Jon since he was nine years old and an active Children's Church participant who used to call himself "Luke Skywalker." He too is part of the "original " group of kids that helped our program to grow. We went through the death of his grandfather and Jon asked hard questions about life, death and God. Since that time Jon has always been the first to speak up on behalf of others who might be experiencing loss. Jon says about himself as a person of faith "I believe in helping others and spreading joy to elders." Now Jon is a sport playing, snowmobile riding, IPOD listening, videogame playing teenager. But there is so much more to Jon than you might think when you see him with his Red Socks cap on. Jon is and has always been an exceptionally sensitive and intuitive young man. He somehow manages to pull off a dry irreverent sense of humor while simultaneously being an

incredibly caring and thoughtful person. Jon is very spiritual, committed to being a disciple of Jesus, and eager to learn more about the Bible. I have always thought that the name "Luke Skywalker—a movie character who is heroic in his spiritual depth, generosity, and courage, is a good one for our Jon Roberge.

In Other Youth News:

HAYDENVILLE YOUTH GROUP LOCK-IN FOR HAITI

What: The Youth Group, with youth leaders Cherylann, Til, and others, will *sleep over* in the church. The group will make a covenant to spend the night in the church building, until early morning when we will rise for a sunrise hike and breakfast, after which we will join Sunday worship!

When: SATURDAY, APRIL 17th, 5:30 p.m to the next morning!

Why: The youth are concerned about the poverty and hardship in Haiti following the earthquake. They are committed to spending the evening educating themselves about Haiti and world poverty through speakers and films, and to taking part in spiritual practices in order to show their solidarity and commitment. They will also be making kits to send to Haiti over the course of the evening, and asking you if you would like to sponsor them to spend the night in order to raise money for Church World Service, Heifer, and other organizations which we partner with in Haiti.

CHARITY TO CHANGE

Our thanks to the hearty and brave Charity to Change Team who led our worship service on March 21, 2010-- Jackie Cloonan, Susan Farrell (Chair), Sue Carbin, Kate Davidheiser and Mary Sheehan. We are also grateful to Joanne Sunshower, Jenny Ladd and Toby Davis for participating in the "Take Two Steps Forward: Common Ground" exercise that served as the sermon. The feedback we have heard is that the service was deeply moving to everyone. The congregational music was especially fitting as was the duet Susan Farrell and Sue Carbin sang during the Offering--all very inspiring. The prayers, confession and children's message all helped tie the service together beautifully. We have begun an important conversation in the Church about class, poverty and wealth--these discussions will continue and will inform our worship and our work.

Thank you Charity to Change Team!



EXPLORING MEMBERSHIP CLASS SERIES

Would you like to learn more about the United Church of Christ and the Haydenville Congregational Church? Would you like to meet others thinking about MAYBE making a more formal relationship with our Church? Would you like to discuss your spiritual journey and hear about the journeys of others? Come join our circle for "Exploring Membership Classes" in the Pastor's Study upstairs after Church on April 11, 18, 25 and May 2. We welcome believers, questioners and questioning believers! Need more information? See Pastor Andrea.

ORGAN CONCERT

By Diane Scott

For those who were there, you know what an amazing musical feast we shared on Saturday afternoon, March 13, 2010, at the church. If you were not there, I can only tell you of the delight it was to spend a chilly, rainy day in our warm sanctuary listening to and enjoying Matthew Dunphy Phinney's talented performance. Matthew chose an ambitious and challenging program to present. The audience sat in rapt silence as the music of Bach, and Mendelssohn poured out over us and filled the room. Silence until we burst into applause for the outstanding performance!

The program notes for Matthew included the following... Matthew is a senior at Trinity College where he plays for the St. John's Episcopal Church in East Hartford. He has been named John Rose Organ scholar at Trinity for the 2009-2010 academic year. A senior, Matthew is majoring in math and music. He will enter the masters program at Oxford next fall in mathematical modeling.

As a young musician, we came to know Matthew when he would play for us as a substitute or a guest musician. What an honor and privilege to see him grown into a master musician and such a fine young man. The concert was a great success, and a great gift to our church. Matt's concert raised \$1,300 for our Capital Campaign! Thank you so much Matthew!

CHURCH COFFEE HOUR: THE LINE-UP FOR APRIL

Delicious goodies appear each and every Sunday for our Coffee Hour time of fellowship and sharing because YOU bring them each week! Bless you and thank you. Remember that the week you bring food, you also help set up and clean up. Here's the line-up:

April 4: A, B, C
April 11: D, E, F, G
April 18: H, I, J, K
April 25: L, M, N, O



Gina Ayvazian, Cora Warner, Kathleen Kent and Esther Warner dine out together at Bread Euphoria and have a euphoric time!
Photo by Sarah Icklan

CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS

By Paula Spencer

We are in the process of transforming the Church library corner into a cozy browsing nook! A comfy love seat is now in place, a new bookcase is to come, and there will be an infusion of books that have been in storage pending more shelf space. Lists of new titles added to the collection will appear in upcoming Newsletters and watch for displays of titles on special subjects. Soon the books will be reorganized and shelved by author, with separate sections for nonfiction and fiction. Some people have mentioned that they're unsure how to check books out so please see Paula Spencer if you need help with that. Clear instructions on how to check out items will be posted this month.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS!

April 2	Mike Estes
April 5	Karen Guiel
April 6	Sasha Klare-Ayvazian
April 7	Deb Luekens
April 11	Danny Hathaway & Beth Howland
April 14	Diane Gahres & Alexander Hunkins
April 15	Will Demarais
April 16	Mary Wheeler & Ruth Parsons
April 18	Mollie Whittaker & Ellianna Chappuis
April 21	Shirley Riga
April 22	Norma Kellogg
April 23	Tammy Walker
April 27	Cheryl Nugent & Carol Prior
April 28	Arax Simsarian
April 29	Claudia Downey & Mary Elias-Gillette
April 30	John Warner



WALK FOR A WORLD WITHOUT WAR

By Doug Renick



The Peace and Justice Steering Committee invites you to go for a walk with them on April 19, Patriots Day! On the day when the "shot heard round the world" happened it's your time to get active and let out a "shout heard round the world...NO MORE WAR!"

The Alliance for Peace and Justice and the New England Peace Pagoda is sponsoring a Walk for a World without War and Weapons (W5!) on April 19. The 9-mile walk begins on the Amherst common at 10:00 a.m. and will end in downtown Northampton at approximately 3:00 p.m. You are also invited to a delicious meal and a program in Lyman Hall, First Churches, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Flyers with more information will be posted at church. Speak to Doug who is part of the planning group for April 19.

CHARITY TO CHANGE COMMUNITY DINNER

Our Charity to Change group is hosting our second Community Dinner on April 22 from 6-8 pm in the church Dining Room. The meal will be free (free-will donations will be gratefully accepted to continue these fun events.) Susan Farrell will sing with Sarah Icklan's band and will lead another community sing to usher in spring and more good feelings. So come and join us for good food and great company! All are invited.

SOUL-SPIRIT-ANIMAL

By Sally Lemaire

Energy to drive the human body
Much as a battery functions with
a car.

We need to charge and change and
Recharge and re-change our souls.

Helping us to take a right path:

To stand against bullying

To stand against poverty

To stand against group think

To aim higher than we think possible

To question our motives and be

Clear about what we do and

Why we do it

To face our fears and ambitions and

Make choices which enable us to

Evolve to a deeper and heightened

Level of God's love and our self-love.



SO MANY GIFTS~HEARTFELT THANKS!

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the following people for their recent gifts to the Church! We are SO grateful!

Connie Fender and Judy Haigler: bulletin board for the new Treasurer's office

Sue Carbin: office chair, bulletin boards and trash can for the new Treasurer's office

Michael and Barbara Estes: paper shredder for the new Treasurer's office

Annie Harrison: adding machine for the new Treasurer's office

Lisa Kautz: fancy new copy machine for the Church

Connie Fender and Judy Haigler: "Saints Seats" the padded cushions on some folding chairs in the Dining Room

Gloria Ayvazian: book case for the library corner

Paula and Richard Spencer: a love seat and small table for the library corner

Judy Bowker: a framed poster which we sold on eBay for the Capital Campaign, AND a beautiful wall hanging to decorate the Sanctuary

Many people knit and crocheted Prayer Shawls after we gave our whole supply to the West Cummington Church when their church burned down

Vicha: a book CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dear Andrea, and Friends at Haydenville Congregational Church,

We sincerely thank you all for supporting Hannah, Dale, Parker, Rowan, Ezra and Ellis during the past four months. Your generosity and love for them is so very comforting to us as presently we cannot be always there for them as we live some distance away. A special thanks for your immediate response to Rowan and Ezra being hospitalized. May God Bless You All.



Jill and John Durrant

First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom

Featuring John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg

First Light is a 12-session DVD and web-based study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God with two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout the Galilee and Jerusalem.

There are two discs. We will show the first disc in series #1 and then the second one after a week off. Shown at Haydenville Congregational Church, Dining Room. Everyone is most welcome. Pastor Andrea will lead this DVD and discussion series.

Why did Jesus happen when he happened? Why the confluence of the Baptism movement of John and the Kingdom movement of Jesus? Why the tiny villages around the Lake? Why the confrontations in Jerusalem? Why then? Why there? Why were the titles of Caesar Augustus -- Divine, Son of God, God from God, Lord, Redeemer, Liberator, and Savior of the World -- taken from a Roman emperor on the Palatine hill and given to a Jewish peasant on the Palestine plain? What were the priorities of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom? How was the status quo of Roman imperial theology subverted by this obscure Galilean whose message continues to indict empire today?

Session #1—Wednesdays

Each session from 5 to 6:30 PM

Apr 7
Apr 14
Apr 21
Apr 28
May 5
May 12

Session #2—Wednesdays

Each session from 5 to 6:30 PM

May 26
June 2
June 9
June 16
June 23
June 30

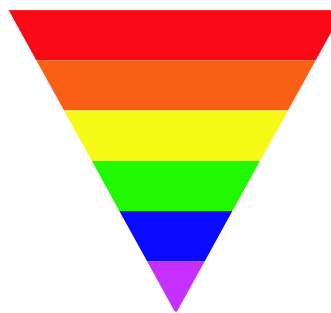
ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

"Do you love me? Feed my sheep." Three times, Jesus repeated this instruction (John 21:15-17). In this last moment with his disciples, he pressed his followers to hear this call: If you love me, take care of the people I so deeply love. At that time, the world held about 300 million people. Today, the earth is home to more than 6.7 billion.

With so many people, can we possibly care for Jesus' far-flung flock?

Yes, we can and we have. Our Church joined hands with our brothers and sisters of faith to support the "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering on Sunday, March 14. Through this offering, we live our love for our Shepherd by bringing material aid to disaster victims and refugees; by helping build strong communities with safe water, education, medical care, and secure sources of food; and by supporting the self-development of struggling peoples. We responded to Jesus' call to us to tend his flock, we connected more deeply with human realities through the world. We became part of the compassionate community that reaches out to care for people when they are in need. Thank you for your contribution to One Great Hour of Sharing.

CALLING ALL ALLIES



The Annual Gay Pride March is Saturday, May 1 and we are calling all our LGBT allies to come march! As Toby says, "We sit together shoulder to shoulder on Sundays, please come out and march with us side by side at the Pride March." Pastor Andrea preached on allied behavior on

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January of this year. We are calling all allies to join us this year as we march and sing through downtown Northampton. Last year we were 60 people strong! This year we are aiming for 100!!! Meet in the parking lot directly across from the Northampton Post Office at 11:30 A.M. We'll have a purple balloon for you to carry. Strollers, dogs, wheelchairs, walkers and tricycles all welcome. Plus Toby says there are some HCChurch t-shirts left to purchase if you want to wear "OUR" Church t-shirt! See Toby about that! Come one, come all! Calling all allies!



CALLING ALL BAKERS

By Jackie Cloonan



The Ladies Aid is once again having their annual Cookie Walk on April 24. We are asking for people to bake cookies. It does not matter if it is one dozen or twenty dozen. This is one of the Ladies Aid's most important fundraisers. The money raised helps meet the needs of our church community and the greater community. And in these hard times the need is great. If you don't like to bake and would like to make a contribution that would be fine also. The event is great fun and yummy too. If you have any questions please call the Cookie Walk chairs, Barbara Estes @ 268-7468 or Deb Edwards @ 268-7818.

CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Pastor Andrea will be leading three Saturday afternoon sessions at the Church for people brought up Catholic who are now part of the UCC. We will use a new booklet published by the UCC as the basis of our discussion. The booklet, *Catholics in the United Church of Christ*, is excellent and will help us direct our conversations. This mini-class series requires pre-registration. Please see Andrea. PLUS you will need to buy the booklet from Andrea for \$5 (or you can get it for free if you are low income). The Saturday sessions are: April 10, 17, 24. (Time in the afternoon to be determined.)

In parishes, we do not get to pick who we will be standing beside as we worship and celebrate various things together. A parish-type family is a hand of cards that is randomly dealt to us, and precisely to the extent that it is truly inclusive, will include persons of every temperament, ideology, virtue, and fault. Also, church involvement, when understood properly, does not leave us the option to walk away whenever something happens that we do not like. It is a covenant commitment, like a marriage, and binds us for better and for worse.

from The Holy Longing:

The Search for A Christian Spirituality

by Ronald Rolheiser

WALKING THE LABYRINTH

by Richard and Paula Spencer

"One foot in front of the other,
The center is always the goal"
(from 'A Labyrinth Poem' by Crystal Blanton)

Both of us have long been fascinated by labyrinths but have never had the chance to experience one. "Someday," we said...Then on Saturday morning, March 6, we were able to walk the sacred path right here at our own beloved Church.

The room was quiet, light subdued, a candle was burning and soft music playing. People came in, removed their shoes, and with reverence began their journey to the labyrinth's center and slowly back again. Some bowed at the entrance, some stopped along the way, a few knelt at the center in prayer or meditation. Each person had a different experience and many recorded their thoughts in a little book before they left.

As we followed the winding path (no dead ends, no way to get lost or make a mistake) we felt blessed to be able to share a tradition carried on by many cultures over the centuries. For us it was a moving and meaningful Lenten practice, one we felt privileged to be part of.

HUGGING: THE PERFECT CURE FOR WHAT AILS YOU

Submitted by Nancy Demarais

Read at the February Ladies Aid Meeting

No movable parts
No batteries to wear out
No periodic checkups
Low energy consumption
High energy yield
Inflation-proof
No monthly payments
No insurance requirements
Theft-proof
Non-taxable
Non-polluting
And, of course, fully returnable.
Hugging is healthy
It relieves tension
Combats depression
Reduces stress
Improves blood circulation
It's invigorating
It's rejuvenating
It elevates self-esteem
It generates goodwill
It has no unpleasant side effects
It is nothing less than a miracle drug.

APRIL CALENDAR

- Thursday, April 1: 7 PM Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service (lights will slowly be extinguished, service closes in candlelight)
- Friday, April 2: 12- 4 PM Good Friday Sanctuary open for prayer and reflection
- Sunday, April 4: 10 AM Easter Worship Service with Communion and Baptismal Ceremony for Coni Gilman-Solomon
- Monday, April 5: 6 PM Diaconate Meeting
- Wednesday, April 7: 5-6:30 PM FIRST LIGHT - Pastor Andrea will lead a 12 session DVD series and web-based study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God. This series features two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem. HCC Dining Room. Everyone is welcome.
- Thursday, April 8: 5:30 PM Soup, Salad and Social Change: *Presenter: Randy Kehler* - Longtime peace activist, community organizer, Traprock co-founder and inspiration for Daniel Ellsberg's release of the Pentagon Papers, Randy Kehler will talk about his personal understanding of, and life-long commitment to, 'active nonviolence' as a means of resolving conflicts at all levels and creating a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.
- Saturday, April 10: 10 AM Book Group at Lilly Library in Florence, Reading "THE GOD WE NEVER KNEW: BEYOND DOGMATIC RELIGION TO A MORE AUTHENTIC CONTEMPORARY FAITH" Contact Paula Spencer with questions.
- Saturday, April 10: (Time in the afternoon to be determined.)
CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. Pastor Andrea will be leading three Saturday afternoon sessions at the Church for anyone who wants to talk about having been raised Catholic and now being part of the UCC. See Andrea to pre-register.
- Sunday, April 11: 10 AM Worship Service
Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day).
"Exploring Membership Classes" Series begins in the Pastor's Study upstairs after Church.
- Tuesday, April 13: 6:30 PM Trustees Meeting
- Wed., April 14: 5-6:30 PM FIRST LIGHT - Pastor Andrea will lead a 12 session DVD series and web-based study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God. This series features two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem. HCC Dining Room. Everyone is welcome.
- Wed., April 14: 7 PM Shepherds Meeting
- Saturday, April 17: 5:30 PM thru
Sunday, April 18: 10:00 AM YOUTH GROUP "*Lock-in For Haiti*" HCC Dining Room, Children's Church, and Sanctuary.
Contact Matilda Cantwell with questions.
- Saturday, April 17: CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. Session #2.
(Time in the afternoon to be determined.)
- Sunday, April 18: 10 AM Worship Service
"Exploring Membership Classes" Class #2 in the Pastor's Study upstairs after Church.
- Monday, April 19: 10 AM Patriots Day. A 9-Mile Walk from a World without War and Weapons begins on the Amherst Common and will end in downtown Northampton (3 PM). The Peace and Justice Steering Committee invites you to go for a walk with them! You are also invited to a delicious meal and a program in First Churches Lyman Hall beginning at 6 PM. For further information speak with Doug Renick.
- 6-7:30 PM Children's Church Committee Meeting, Church Dining Room
(Committee members: Please note time change)

CALENDAR CONT'D FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

- Wed., April 21: 5-6:30 PM FIRST LIGHT - Pastor Andrea will lead a 12 session DVD series and web-based Study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God. This series features two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem. HCC Dining Room. Everyone is welcome.
- Thursday, April 22: Earth Day – (actions and activities will be announced by the Peace and Justice Steering Committee)
- 1 PM Ladies Aid Meeting, Church Dining Room
- 6-8 PM Charity to Change Group is hosting our second Community Dinner in the HCC Dining Room. The meal will be free and free-will donations will be gratefully accepted to continue these fun events. Susan Farrell will sing with Sarah Icklan's band and will lead another community sing to usher in Spring and more good feelings. So come and join us for good food and great company! All are invited.
- Saturday, April 24: Armenian Martyrs' Day
- 9-1 PM HCC COOKIE WALK. COME and SHOP and EAT!
- CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. Session #3.
(Time in the afternoon to be determined.)
- Sunday, April 25: 10 AM Worship Service with Baptismal Ceremony for Lucas Carbin-O'Brien
"Exploring Membership Classes" Class #3 in the Pastor's Study upstairs after Church.
- Monday, April 26: 5:30 PM Dining Room, Peace and Justice Steering Committee
- Wed., April 28: 5-6:30 PM FIRST LIGHT - Pastor Andrea will lead a 12 session DVD series and web-based Study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God. This series features two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem. HCC Dining Room. Everyone is welcome.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY: JOEL HAYDEN

By Kathleen Kent

I am in awe of a man that I know mostly from a gravestone and a marble tablet in the sanctuary. I know *about* him from reading historical records, but what's better is praying in church with him in mind or paying respect at his gravesite (and those of his wife and children). From this I get the sense of his undying love for the church and its parishioners 170 years or so later. Plus, I'm well aware of his birth date. From the marble tablet (in the sanctuary):

JOEL HAYDEN
BORN AT WILLIAMSBURG, MASS, APRIL 8, 1798,
DIED AT NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 10, 1873,
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH,
1863—1866,
A LIFE OF SUCCESSFUL YET UNTIRING INDUSTRY,
AN EARLY AND CONSTANT COURAGE IN SUPPORT OF
HUMAN FREEDOM,
AND A FAITHFUL DEVOTION TO CHRISTIAN WORKS,
BROUGHT HIM PUBLIC HONORS,
THE RESPECT OF ME, AND THE LOVE OF MANY FRIENDS,
THIS VILLAGE, LONG CHERISHED BY HIS CARE, AND
GUIDED BY HIS PURE EXAMPLE,
AND THIS EDIFICE, LARGELY THE FRUIT OF HIS LIBERALITY,
ARE HIS BEST MONUMENTS.



1798 Joel Hayden 1873

Manufacturer; A builder of Churches,
A School, A Village. Member of Hope
Engine Company No. 1 of Haydenville.
Banker. Charter Member & first Master
of Hampshire Lodge, A. F. & A. M.



Haydenville Congregational Church

United Church of Christ
143 Main Street, PO Box 257
Haydenville, MA 01039

WHEN I HEAR A SEXIST, RACIST, OR HOMOPHOBIC REMARK

By Rev. Martin B. Copenhaver

from *A BOOK OF (UN)COMMON PRAYERS:
Extraordinary Prayers for Ordinary Occasions*

Jesus, I can't believe what I just heard. It is outrageous. My pulse is racing. My mind is spinning. My palms are sweaty. Even so, I tempted to let it pass. Maybe he didn't mean it that way. Does that make a difference? But, no, I can't let those hideous words just hang in the air. So give me the courage to say something in response. Give me the wisdom to know what to say. Help me to speak the truth in love. The truth--not wielded like a weapon, but in love. And then, Jesus, one more thing I would ask: even as I correct another, save me from self-righteousness. Help me to remember that all have sinned and fallen short of your glory. Even me. Sometimes, especially me. Amen.