

THIS WEEK AT THE CREEK

THE WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER OF CROSS CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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*Maples and aspens know -
they boast a dying yellow and flame a glorious orange
when morning sun enlivens and setting sun glistens
off their brittle leaves
they flaunt their final color
then the air chills and breezes whisper gently "come"
and down they shed til softly matted is the forest and the road
the ground is then assembled
with yellow hearts and orange red and golden leaves
with brown and green from grass and weeds and crackles under foot
the end comes with winter rains
which mat and soak and finally wash away
the aspens and the maples found going not so hard in all this glory---
but then aspens and maples believe in spring*

---Mark Murphy, FSC

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IN WORSHIP THIS WEEKEND

NOTE: There is **NO** Saturday Service this coming weekend, October 17, due to BEGGAR'S NIGHT!

This weekend we will continue our Pentecost series **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A GEOGRAPHY OF FAITH**, based on the book by Barbara Brown Taylor. **Pastor Mike** will be offering a prompting entitled "*The Practice of Feeling Pain: Breakthrough*," which follows Chapter 10 of Barbara Brown Taylor's book. **Kenny Roaden** will be singing. We'll also be sharing in a special **HOLY COMMUNION FOR ALL SAINTS DAY** in which we will remember the saints who are dear to us, light a candle remembrance, and listen to a Carrie Newcomer song, "Leaves Don't Drop, They Just Let Go" from her Geography of Light CD.

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Dear Cross Creeker:

*In celebration of the historic occasion this past week of President Obama signing into law the MATTHEW SHEPARD AND JAMES BYRD, JR. HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT and in keeping with ALL SAINTS DAY, I wanted to share with you a reflection by my friend and Alliance of Baptist colleague, Rev. Dr. Stephen Sprinkle, associate professor of practical theology at Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. Sprinkle has been researching LGBT hate crimes for an anthology of stories for his upcoming book, **Unfinished Lives: Reviving the Memory of LGBT Hate Crimes Murder Victims.***

The End of the Beginning: How the Passage of the Matthew Shepard Act Transforms Us

Stephen V. Sprinkle, Ph.D.
Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas

Researching LGBT hate crimes for four years has changed my life. Now that the passage of the Matthew Shepard Act is imminent, I feel another sort of change coming: to my work, to the LGBTQ community, and to my country. For decades, families, loved ones, law enforcement officers, and social justice advocates have prayed for, labored for, and agitated for a federal law extending protection to queer folk victimized by anti-LGBT violence. Tens of thousands of

Americans, straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender have labored tirelessly for this result. Our well-practiced shoulders are again set to the task, and with one more great heave, the first major expansion of legal protection against physical harm for vulnerable Americans in the 21st century will make it across the finish line. The end of the beginning has come at last. No more than that, and no less.

The dead are beyond further physical harm. So many hundreds have died at the hands of the ignorant, the malicious, and the sincerely bigoted. Gay Charlie Howard drowned in Bangor, Maine. Lesbian Talana Kreeger, manually disemboweled in Wilmington, North Carolina. Navajo Two-Spirit youth, F.C. Martinez, Jr., brained with a 25-pound rock in a blind canyon in Cortez, Colorado. African American transwoman, Duanna Johnson, shot down in a Memphis, Tennessee alley. Pfc. Barry Winchell, murdered by a fellow soldier with a baseball bat at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, on the suspicion that he was gay. And the archetype of them all, young Matthew Shepard, pistol-whipped into a coma and left to die, tied to the foot of a buck fence in Laramie, Wyoming. For every victim whose name is remembered, scores of anonymous others have died, their agonies unreported, their names forgotten.

What will change for all these victims of hate, once the Shepard Act becomes law? And, what about their families, lovers and spouses—what will change for them?

For the dead, the change will come subtly, like a gift of dignity. The Shepard Act is not only for the living. Those who have died at the hands of hatred will finally receive a measure of vindication. No longer will they be merely the debris of social history. Their stories will be told with renewed passion, and more and more people will want to know who they were. Their lives will take on a greater sense of meaning to the LGBTQ community, who will find encouragement to embrace these dead as their own—just as blacks, Jews, and other besieged peoples have embraced their fallen friends and family members. These LGBTQ victims have become my teachers in my quest to recover their stories and the meaning of their lives. I ask, today, that they also become your teachers. Remembering them will help all of us find new strength for justice.

For the families and loved ones of these victims, perhaps a measure of peace will come at last. Their loss, of course, is incalculable. Their pain is beyond reckoning. I have seen the furrows in their brows, the lingering sadness in their eyes. As Ryan Skipper's mother Pat said to me, there is no closure for her and those like her. The change will come, I suspect, with a sense of honor, and a quiet assurance that their beloved will have not died in vain. When the Shepard Act finally passes, I will think first of all about the valiant witness of the mothers—women who never sought the spotlight, but who fought back tears to learn how to speak out for their children and for everyone else's children. Signing day in President Obama's office will be most of all for Judy Shepard, Pat Mulder, Elke Kennedy, Pauline Martinez, Denise King, Kathy Jo Gaither and everyone else whose flesh and blood have consecrated the moment of passage.

Those who believe in justice will feel the change, too. The LGBTQ community will be challenged to mature and take their place among communities of survivors, witnesses who understand that it takes hard work to make hope become real for everyone. At the stroke of a pen, the entire LGBTQ community will experience the greatest lift since the Stonewall Rebellion forty years ago. But that will not be all. The America I know and love will encounter change on the day the Shepard Act becomes law, too. Summoned by the angel of justice, the American people will face the challenge to make the promise of the Constitution come true for their transgender, gay, bi, and lesbian neighbors and friends.

Passage and signing the Matthew Shepard Act into law will not magically stop the killing. Record numbers of LGBTQ Americans, especially young transgender people of color, are dying violently all across the land. But the high water mark of hatred has been scotched with the stroke of a pen with President Obama's signature on this historic bill. The end of the beginning of full equality for my people has come. And we who believe in the fullness of justice will not rest until it comes. Continue to preach, to pray, and to advocate until all of us our free to love without the threat of violence.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WORK-SHIP: November 28-29

Our next work-ship will be November 28-29, and we will assemble grooming kits for Aids Resource Center Ohio (ARC). Each kit will contain ten items. Since we hope to do **50** kits, that means collecting **500** individual items. Cross Creekers are generous so we can do it! Luckily all the items are available at dollar and discount stores for \$1 or less. Please take the shopping list, enclosed in your bulletin, with you to the store. Also check your bulletin each week as there will be an update on which items are still needed. The goal is to come out fairly even with all ten items.

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE PROJECT - Final Weekend for Nominations

Cross Creek celebrates seven years of community support through our Christmas Angel Tree Project. If you know of a child or family in need of basic necessities, clothing or toys this Christmas, please email Dan Carl at dancar1@aol.com by November 1. Please provide a contact name (parent or caregiver) and phone number so Dan can follow up. We have more than 50 names tags for the Angel Tree already. Please remember that nominations must be submitted by this Sunday, November 1.



READY FOR THE 2009 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT?!



This year we are presenting "Matt and Lucy's Version Births," a play written by the writers of the "Living the Questions Series." It explores the differing stories of Jesus' birth told in the books of Matthew and Luke. Which one is right? Join us and find out!

We're looking for children and youth of all ages! The rehearsal schedule is 5-6 PM on Sunday, November 22 & 29 and December 13th, and a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 19th from 11:30-1pm. The pageant will be held at 5:30 on Saturday, December 19th. A sign-up sheet is in the hallway and if you have any questions please contact Kim Lockwood@ 829-3272 or kimberly.lockwood@notes.udayton.edu.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CROSS CREEK CHURCH?

Come to the Exploring Membership Class!

Those interested in investigating covenant membership at Cross Creek Community Church, as well as those interested in learning more about the church's statement of faith; its vision, mission and distinctive values; its decision making processes and its varied ministries, as well as its affiliation with the United Church of Christ and the Alliance of Baptists are invited to attend the Exploring Covenant Membership Class on **Saturday, November 14** from **9 AM to 2 PM**. You can sign up in the church hallway or contact Pastor Mike Castle to register. Childcare is available upon request with advance notice.



KNIT 1, PURL 2 FOR RUBATE HEALTH CENTRE BANDAGE PROJECT

When Bill Youngkin packed for his trip to Kenya this past summer, he managed to squeeze into his luggage some hand-knit bandages for the health centre run by our Global Partners at Rubate College. The bandages were the handiwork of Cross Creek's own Bev Barnes, who has been knitting for Rubate for years. The bandages were so well received by the clinic staff..especially for arm and leg wounds..that our Kenyan friends have asked for more. Bev needs our help!!

Bandages may be knitted or crocheted. Complete instructions and requirements for materials may be found on the SONKA website, sonkaucc.org, under the "Ministries" tab. Call Bev at 937/643-3197 with questions.

LOOKING FOR LEADERS FOR A NEW CROSS CREEK MISSION TEAM

Rev. Bill Youngkin, Pastor Mike Castle, and our Justice and Witness Ministry Chair, David Lauri, have been working with other interfaith leaders and faith communities to start a chapter of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) here in the Miami Valley. Over the next 11 months, we have the opportunity to turn it into an organization that can powerfully affect change in our community. We are looking for a handful of Cross Creek folks who are willing to work with Bill Youngkin in forming a mission team here at Cross Creek that will lead our church in this effort. If you are interested in being a part of this unfolding community organizing project, please come to First Baptist Church of Dayton (111 W. Monument St. -- next to the downtown YMCA) on **Monday, November 9, 2009 at 7:00 PM**. If you have questions, please talk with Bill or Mike or David.

DEPLOYMENT & INTEGRATION ISSUES FACING U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL, THEIR FAMILIES & THE CONGREGATION

You are invited to the gathering of the Covenant Society for Pastoral Counseling of Miami Valley Hospital for this presentation by Dr. Regina Shillinglaw and Lt. Col. Stephen Hamilton (ret) of WPAFB. It will be held on **Monday, November 2** at 7:00 - 8:30 PM at First Baptist Church, 111 W Monument Ave, Dayton. Since Cross Creek Church is a member of the Covenant Society, you are encouraged to come!!

NOVEMBER PFLAG MEETING – COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)

The November meeting of PFLAG Dayton is **Tuesday, Nov 10 at Cross Creek**. Social time is 7:00-7:30 PM with the meeting starting at 7:30. As always, a peer support group will be available. November's program featuring representatives the Cincinnati COLAGE group might be of special interest to many Cross Creek parents. COLAGE, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, is an outreach program for children of gay and lesbian parents started by a women with a gay father. Although there is not a COLAGE group in Dayton, many of the contacts between kids are on line. Learn more about COLAGE at www.colage.org.

DAYTON LGBT COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER -- Saturday, Nov 21

Come for a Thanksgiving dinner featuring turkey, ham and all the fixin's! Bring a salad, dessert or side dish to share to St.Paul United Methodist Church, 101 Huffman Ave in East Dayton. The evening begins at 5:30 PM with a social hour followed by dinner at 6:30. Then the Dayton Gay Men's Chorus will preview their 2010 Winter Concert to be held on Dec 5th.

