

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE - JULY 10, 2011

Reflections

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

"THE MORNING MOCHA & MAN IN A JEEP"

BY, REV. DAVID HUNTING

It was a beautiful Colorado Sunday morning! I was sitting in my clerics on the old stone wall outside the church enjoying a morning mocha. The azure blue sky had fluffy white clouds floating by. Birds were singing their hymns in the big juniper tree. People were driving up and down Pawnee Avenue smiling and waving a friendly hello.

A jeep pulled up in front of me by the curb. A twenty something man was behind the wheel that leaned toward the passenger window and asked – "What is a Congregational Church?" I explained that Congregationalists were some of the first people to found America on principles of personal liberty and freedom of religious thought. "No matter who you are ~ or where you are on life's journey ~ you are welcomed here," I said.

The man in the jeep then asked, "Do you believe Jesus Christ is the only way into heaven?" "No" I said, "I'm respectful of other points of view beside my own." I think diversity is what makes the world more wondrous! With that the man in the jeep looked me straight in the eye and said, "You and your congregation are all going straight to hell!"

It was a beautiful Colorado Sunday morning. The serenity of that moment had now been interrupted by a soul who thought his way – was the only way. How sad I thought, in Manitou Springs where we try to acknowledge differences, there are still some who would hold to such strict and singular views. Pastorally and personally, I don't think that's what Jesus had in mind, as scriptures would suggest he was open to welcoming everyone.

The man in the jeep was still really mad! Before he hit the gas and drove off, I shared this final theological reflection. "On a beautiful Colorado Sunday morning like this, I would think it borders on a sin not to put the top down on your jeep, and let the fresh air blow away any cob webs of the heart, mind or soul." With that he told me once again I was going to straight to hell.

I don't subscribe to a wooden way of thinking that holds people captive to fear and unawareness. I'm thankful to live in a country where freedom of thought is valued with high reverence, even when we disagree. May God bless America, and all people of peace and tolerance around the wider world. It's still a beautiful Colorado Sunday morning!



Rev. David Hunting is the minister for the Historic Community Congregational Church of Manitou Springs

Interested in submitting your own Reflection for the RMCUCC to use? contact us:

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