

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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CRAZY. "He has gone out of his mind." (Mark 3:21) Mental illness presents many societal issues. Call someone *CRAZY* and acts of rejection can be perpetrated on someone, even with or without psychological diagnosis. It is sad how named *CRAZY* persons have so many cruel things done to them. It is not just being identified as mentally *CRAZY*, persons can also be identified as physically or spiritually *CRAZY*. It is unkind when persons are laughed at for being in the "nut-house" or sanitariums or hospital psyche wards. Or even the flippant remark, "Oh, s/he's crazy" can cause irreparable harm to relationships with families and friends. Abusive behaviors perpetrated on someone have often resulted in low self-esteem/lack of confidence/*CRAZINESS* in those persons. And think of all the so-called *CRAZY* persons who have given us inventions/cures/music that have made life better for us. God's gifts and graces are given to all of us.

It is reported in Mark's Gospel, chapter 3, after "The Twelve were chosen," Jesus gave them authority to cast out demons. Jesus then goes home. There was such a crowd around Jesus "...so that they could not even eat." (Mark 3:20). The crowd accused Jesus that He "...had gone out of his mind." He's *CRAZY!* The family comes to try to get Him away to a safe place.

The scribes (religious legal experts) made their way from Jerusalem so they could discredit Jesus' ministry. Jesus offers a response that challenges the scribes' authority. They then plot to discredit Him that led eventually to His death, which they accomplished. However, since we know the end of the story, they failed their mission to destroy Jesus, for this *CRAZY* Jesus became the Resurrected Jesus, "conquering sin and death, and reconciling the world to Himself." (UCC Statement of Faith).

Mark includes a story about Jesus' relationship to His family. It is at this point that Jesus expands the definition of family, "Whoever does God's will is my brother, sister, and mother." (Mark 3:35). It is Jesus' inclusiveness that makes us family with Him.

In Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "So we aren't depressed. But even if our bodies are breaking down on the outside, the person that we are on the inside is being renewed every day." (4:16). There is a little bit of *CRAZY* in all of us, but God loves us no matter whatever flaw we may think we have or named by others. It is too strenuous and time-consuming to be perfect. With God's help and loving support from one another, nothing can separate us from God loving us and being sister and brother to one another. *CRAZY?* God will take care of that, too. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*