

SACRED RESISTANCE: CLAIMING HOPE

The sign outside of the old brick church reads *Haywood Street—Holy Chaos. Abundant Grace. Welcome Table*. The colorful logo depicts the intersection of high rises and mountain tops. It illustrates unhoused folks keeping warm around a burn barrel and sanctuary doors propped wide open. Beneath the sign, a man is unloading and reorganizing the contents of his backpack. He has two pairs of socks, a travel-sized tube of toothpaste, three one-dollar bills, a book on the art of paper folding, and a well-worn Bible. He utilizes the church's harm reduction program, and so he also has a handful of alcohol swabs and a pack of clean needles. He is a member of this church, as are all others who deem themselves so. This is declared good and this is declared holy.

Broke or affluent, afflicted or well—we come kicking, crawling, and skipping to our altar. Panhandlers prepare Communion, a recently released prisoner leads us in the Lord's Prayer. We recognize a Jesus who shows up as the man beneath the sign—folding the contents of his pack and managing his addiction the best he knows how. We claim ourselves as children of God, and in doing so, we claim our hope.

www.haywoodstreet.org

Haywood Street Congregation is a Reconciling Methodist Ministry in Asheville, North Carolina. It is a sister congregation with Central United Methodist Church.