

# **Pastor calls Dean a 'principled' member: Candidate donated tax rebate to ministries for poor people**

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Robert A. Lee, the pastor of the First Congregational Church (UCC) in Burlington, Vermont, says that Howard Dean is a supportive member “with strong principled views.”

A member since 1982, Dean reflected his beliefs when as governor he signed the “politically risky” civil union legislation giving same-sex couples rights equal to those of heterosexuals, Lee told *United Church News*, the denominational magazine, in September.

Another example of Dean’s principled action, the pastor said, came after the first round of federal tax rebates, which President Bush said were for “middle-class Americans.” First Congregational’s board of trustees suggested that members who were able should consider donating part of the rebates to ministries for the poor. “One of the first letters I received in response to that appeal was from the Governor of Vermont’s office with a check for [Dean’s] entire tax rebate,” Lee said.