

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

March 2015

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

- High-lights
 1. Connections: A Counseling Center Affirming Spirituality and Diversity had its grand opening on March 21. Seeing clients with a staff of 4 therapists, 2 interns and 2 spiritual directors. Still more hard start-up work to do: marketing, fundraising, ...
 2. UU Congregational disability certification program will be called the Accessible and Inclusion Ministry, or AIM for short. Web pages created and being reviewed. Going to make a big splash at General Assembly in June.
 3. Short story-oriented videos on hiatus for now.
- Helping care for both grandsons: Nate, age 4 every other Saturday and Zach age 2 months every other Tuesday.
- Began the UUMA program in Entrepreneurial Ministry January 29 – February 1 at Asilomar. Will be establishing the Wellness and Education Center at Connections as my project for this class
- Exercise schedule going well.

Challenges

- My Dad has been quite ill and I've been a primary family contact and frequent visitor. He has been doing better in recent weeks.
- Keeping from being over committed. Sometimes this is easier than others.

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Attended *The Spirituality Factor Conference* in Oakland, and served on a panel describing the importance of spirituality in helping heal from mental health problems. October 9-10.

Healing

Counseling Center

- Held monthly Board meetings, and many more working meetings. Had grand opening!
- Seeing clients. Not a full load, yet.
- Engaged in a contract with a grant writer and fund raiser specialist.

Reaching Across

Continued compensated job at Reaching Across organization, for quarter-time work. Attend Monday support group meetings, two Interfaith Support Groups per month, a spirituality group once a month, Friday craft days and some Wednesday events.

Support Groups

- Continued co-leading interfaith support group for people with depression and sadness.
- Continued to recommend support group for families of those with mental illness.

Pastoral Associates

- Led the Pastoral Associates meetings and worked with several congregation members as an associate.

Mental Health Committee

Merged the Mental Health Committee with the MPUUC Social Justice Committee. Our plans:

April 12 – Movie Night – The Fisher King with a discussion afterward

April 13– Barbara gives a homily on PTSD

May – Publicize and participate in the NAMI Walk in San Francisco

Community Ministry

- Serve as mentor to two community ministers as they navigate through their preliminary fellowship. It is a 3-year commitment for each person. They have finished their second year of preliminary fellowship.
- Serving as informal mentor and spiritual director to a prospective mental health community minister in the Washington DC area.

Spiritual Direction

- I am a Spiritual Director at Connections.

Priestly

- None

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- Suspended production of YouTube videos using my own equipment due to workload on Connections.
- Mental Health pages on MPUUC web site continue to be widely accessed.

UUA Accessibility Group

- Leading effort to create a congregational disability accessibility certification program to be called the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM). 8 Field Test congregations underway for almost 2 years. This effort will be formally open to the general public at General Assembly in June.
- Continued to maintain the website for the new UU accessibility group *EqUUal Access* www.equualaccess.org.

UUA Addictions Ministry

- As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, helped run their web site www.uuaddictionsministry.org.

Board Membership

- On the Board of the Universalist Recovery Church, a UU church specializing in recovery from mental health and substance abuse located near Portland, Oregon.

Other

Books Read

- *Resilience – Two Sisters and a Story of Mental Illness*, by Jessie Close, with Pete Earley, Grand Central Publishing, 2015. The uncompromising story of Jessie Close, who is the sister of actress Glenn Close, and who has lived with Bi-polar Disorder most of her life.
- *Whipping Boy – The forty-year search for my twelve-year-old bully*, by Allen Kurzweil, Harper Collins 2015. Journalist Kurzweil tracks down a man who bullied him 40 years before. He finds him and the bully doesn't remember him at all, and in the end apologizes.

- *A Ministry of Presence – Organizing, Training, and Supervising Lay Pastoral Care Providers in Liberal Religious Faith Communities*, by Rev. Dr. Denis Meacham, e-book, 2014. Design of a pastoral associates program somewhat different than mine. Very well done.
- *I Am Not Sick I Don't Need Help! – How to Help Someone with Mental Illness Accept Treatment*, by Xavier Amador, Ph.D. Vida Press, 2012. Amador presents an approach called LEAP for Listen, Empathize, Agree and Partner, that is designed to improve communication with people with mental illness so that they will take their medication. He asserts that inability to admit that one has a mental illness is a symptom of the illness itself, similar to a delusion, and not denial.
- *Shrinks – The Untold Story of Psychiatry*, by Jeffrey A. Lieberman, MD with Ogi Ogas, Little, Brown and Company, 2015. Fascinating history of psychiatry from the early 1800s to the present day. The author is the former president of the American Psychiatry Association during the development of the DSM-5. Pro-medical model, but also pro-having a whole life.
- *Working Stiff – Two Years, 262 Bodies, and the Making of a Medical Examiner*, by Judy Melinek, M.D. and T.J. Mitchell, Scribner, 2014. True and often grizzly story of Dr. Melinek's time working in New York City as a medical examiner., which included time when the World Trade Towers were destroyed.
- *The Stranger*, by Camilla Läckberg, Pegasus Books, translated in 2013. I seem to be seriously addicted to Läckberg's mysteries. This one is about a pair of siblings who are kidnapped and what happens when they grow up.
- *The Hidden Child*, by Camilla Läckberg, Pegasus Books, translated in 2012. This one is about a Norwegian SS officer who goes to Sweden and buries his past.

Personal

- Need to continually work at life balance, stress and depression management. This is going successfully and is sometimes easier than others.
- Work out at City Sports 3 times a week.

Other

- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee every quarter
- Monthly status meetings with EqUual Access
- Visit my spiritual director and my psychiatrist regularly.
- Attended MPUUC Board meetings.

2015 Development Plan

Area	Plans	Time line	Measurement	Status
Continuing education:				
Take one or two classes a year	Investigate classes to take in this year	Ongoing- Identify classes	Take classes by December 2015	
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June	June 2015	Event attended	
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31 NAMI California conference where I will be on a panel.	Attended by Dec. 2015	
Help in starting new counseling center	Attend meetings as member of the board of the new center	Throughout 2015	Center is on a sound financial footing and self-sustaining.	
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Disability Credentialing Program	Lead the group which will administer the AIM certification program for UUA congregations.	Program made public in June 2015	New congregations sign up for the program	
Spiritual Direction	Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice at Connections.	On-going		
Long term possibilities				
Plan for sabbatical	Plan for ministerial sabbatical of 6 months	Don't know when	Rethink this after Zach is older and Connections is well established.	