

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2015

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

- High-lights
 1. Connections: A Counseling Center Affirming Spirituality and Diversity seeing clients with a staff of 4 therapists, 2 interns and 2 spiritual directors. New Board members joined. Financial and marketing efforts started. First offerings of Wellness and Recovery classes.
 2. UU Congregational disability certification program the Accessible and Inclusion Ministry, or AIM for short, has web pages on the UUA website and was formally announced at General Assembly.
- Helping care for both grandsons: Nate, age 4 every other Saturday and Zach age 5 months every other Tuesday.
- For the UUMA program in Entrepreneurial Ministry I made two videos, one about Connections, and one about the Wellness and Education Center at Connections, my project for the class.
- Exercise schedule going well.

Challenges

- My Dad has been quite ill and I've been a primary family contact and frequent visitor. He met his newest great grandson in May.



- Keeping from being over committed. Sometimes this is easier than others.

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Took on-line education class *Creating a Healthcare Practice Welcoming to LGBT Seniors* by Lavender Seniors of the East Bay and Life Eldercare. May 21, 2015. Excellent class for healthcare professionals about how to treat the special problems of LGBT seniors.
- Took webinar *Faith & Resistance: Legal Responsibility for Congregational Activism* by Asha Wilkerson. May 21, 2015. A very good overview of various legal situations that congregations get involved with. Contact info: <http://thewilkersonlawoffice.com>.

Healing

Counseling Center

- Held monthly Board meetings, and many more working meetings. Recruited new Board members
- Seeing clients. Not a full load, yet.
- Applied for new grants using a grant writer and fund raiser specialist.
- Received a large anonymous contribution.

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

Mental Health Committee now part of the MPUUC Social Justice Committee. Our plans:

April 11 – Movie Night – The Fisher King with a discussion afterward

April 12– Barbara gives a homily on PTSD

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

Community Ministry

- One of the two community ministers who I have been mentoring was granted final fellowship. It has been a 3-year commitment for each person. The other is in her final 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

- April 12. MPUUC service. Homily about ADHD.

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

- Led the effort to create a congregational disability accessibility certification program called the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM). 8 Field Test congregations underway for 2 years. This effort was formally announced to the general public at General Assembly in June. I will lead the effort to get the program underway.
- Continued to maintain the website for the new UU accessibility group *EqUUal Access* www.equualaccess.org. Will be handed off to a professional web developer.

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

- *Chasing the Scream – The First and Last Days of the War on Drugs*, by Johann Hari, Bloomsbury, 2015. Hari makes a compelling case, with lots of historical evidence, for decriminalizing drugs, while making some drugs available only from physicians. He claims the War on Drugs has been a failure which has inadvertently made for more addicts, ruined lives, violence and criminal activity.
- *Restored to Sanity: Essays on the Twelve Steps by Unitarian Universalists*, Edited by Ken and Cathlean, Skinner House Books, 2014. Each of the twelve steps of AA has two essays by UUs explaining their particular interpretation of that step and its meaning in their lives. Would be good for people who are UUs and Alcoholics.
- *My Grandfather's Blessings – Stories of Strength, Refuge, and belonging* by Rachel Naomi Remen, M. D., Riverhead Books, 2000. One more book full of the wonderful wisdom of Rachel Naomi Remen. I highly recommend it.
- *No God but God – The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam, (Updated Edition)*, by Reza Aslan, Random House, 2011. Excellent introduction to Islam, the events and personalities that shaped it. Very positive outlook for the future.
- *Who Will Remember Me? – A Daughter's Memoir of Grief and Recovery*, by Barbara Hamilton-Holway, Skinner House Books, 2004. Poignant memoir by UU minister about the death of her mother and her grief.
- *New York – The Novel Resilience*, by Edward Rutherfurd, Doubleday, 2009. Historical fiction with accounts of important eras in New York City starting with the Dutch up to the World Trade Towers. Follows the history of a family.
- *Instruments of Darkness*, by Imogen Robertson, Viking, 2009. Mystery story set in 16th century England. Beautifully written with wonderfully complex characters.
- *An Improper English Mission: An Olympia Brown Mystery*, by Judith Campbell, Mainly Murder Press, 2014. Another mystery from the UU minister Rev. Judith Campbell. This time she visits England and helps uncover financial and other irregularities in an old manor house.
- *A Singular Mission: An Olympia Brown Mystery*, by Judith Campbell, Mainly Murder Press, 2014. This time, Rev. Brown has a temporary ministry job where a parishioner with a mental health problem takes too much of an interest in her. Turns out very positive, with parishioner getting help and Rev. Brown being compassionate. Enough to make me write to the author and thank her for writing a book where a person can have a mental health problem and be dealt with compassionately.
- *A Twisted Mission: An Olympia Brown Mystery – The Prequel*, by Judith Campbell, Mainly Murder Press 2015. In this mystery there is an attempted suicide which Rev Olympia treats compassionately, and which results in the successful treatment, and challenging the bully who provoked it.

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	Complete
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.	