

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2017

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

The All-Time Best Day of My Ministry: May 3, 2017. 3 Separate Events Happened!

1) I had a meeting with the Fremont Unified School District to talk about the possibility of using Emotional CPR (eCPR) to help with their student stress problem. They were really interested, thought of several possible ways to use it, will be sitting in on a workshop. Much more than I was expecting in a first meeting.

2) I attended a meeting of spiritual directors and met another spiritual director who is interested in creating a "Listening Post" for people who are on the margins - homeless or mentally ill. This is a place where people could come and sit and be listened to. So together we will explore this idea over the next several months. First explorations with Faithful Fools are very positive!

3) I got an email from Skinner House Books, the UUA's press, inviting me to write a book about mental health in congregations. This was totally out of the blue, and quite an honor.

Other:

- Co-leader of Ableism Task Force for the UUMA
- At General Assembly, Responsive Resolution to change the name of "Standing on the Side of Love" passed.
- Continue helping care for both grandsons.

Challenges

- Keeping from being over committed, but I'm getting much better at this.

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Attended Emotional CPR (eCPR) training April 6-7 in Oakland and became an eCPR Practitioner.
- Acted as an eCPR Apprentice for trainings in Hayward and in Oakland April 10-12.
- Psychopharmacology in Plain English, course from Dr. Kenneth Carter from Cross Country Education. Excellent discussion of psychiatric drugs, ethical issues, etc. for people who are not prescribers.
- Attended CAMHPRO webinar on *Peer Support Specialist Trainings & Pay Ranges*, by Karin Lettau, June 8, 2017. Good overview of what trainings are available to train peer supporters.
- Attended March Door to Wellness webinar: *Supporting Increased Community Participation: An Introduction to Community Inclusion and Peer Support*, by Matthew Federici, Copeland Center.
- Attended April Door to Wellness webinar: *National Certification for Peer Specialists: How Canada Makes it Work*, by Shaleen Jones, Executive Director, Peer Support Accreditation & Certification Canada. They've done a lot of good things in Canada.

- Attended May Door to Wellness webinar: *DBSA Peer Leadership Center: An online resource and networking site for peer specialists*, by Ingrid Deetz and Mary Dean from the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA). Great new website for peer specialists.
- Attended June Door to Wellness webinar: *Language: How We Create a World of Health Wellness*, by BJ North and Matthew Federici. Look at the power of intentional language to promote wellness in a strength-based environment.
- Attended June Door to Wellness webinar: *The Importance of Language for Peer Specialists*, Co-presenters: Matthew Federici and B. J. North. Addressed how to make intentional word choices that support the growth and empowerment of peers.
- Attended webinar: *Men and Epilepsy - In Observance of Men's Health Month*, by Dr. Steven Owens and Patricia Osborne Shafer of the Epilepsy Foundation, June 28, 2017. Good basic information about epilepsy.

Healing

Counseling Center

Completed closing down counseling center.

Fremont Unified School District

Part of a task force in the Fremont Unified School District to help students who are under excessive stress. Working on a plan to bring eCPR to the schools in the district. (see highlights) This group will continue to meet next year.

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 leading Elder's Group as part of small group ministry at MPUUC
- 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.

Spiritual Direction

- Attended meeting of East Bay Spiritual Directors May 3, 2017. Met another spiritual director Karolyn Stenlund who was interested in doing spiritual direction to the marginalized. Went with Karolyn to visit the Faithful Fools and talk about the possibility of having a "Listening Post" in the Tenderloin district in San Francisco. They loved the idea. We will be working with another spiritual director in Alaska who has done this and will create a proposed plan for what we will do.

Priestly

- Led the service on April 9 on "Emotional CPR." Received many positive comments.

Social Justice

Community Awareness

Mental Health pages on MPUUC web site continue to be widely accessed.

Racial Justice

- Attended Annual Lobby day for the NAACP in Sacramento, May 22, 2017.
- Joined the on-line Safety Pin Box education program for white allies.

UUA Accessibility Group

- The congregational disability accessibility certification program called the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) program continues its general availability. Five congregations have officially entered the program. I am in charge of implementing this program. I have set up four review teams to follow the congregations through the process.

UUA Addictions Ministry

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

Other

Books Read

- *The Dark Night of the Soul – A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection between Darkness and Spiritual Growth*, by Gerald G. May, M.D. A lot of examination of the works of St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa. Found it hard to get into.
- *Dragons to Butterflies – The Metamorphosis of a Man*, by Johnnie Calloway, Balboa Press, 2016. Story of the life of a man through child-abuse, substance abuse, depression, and unsteady relationships.
- *Blessings*, by Mary Craig, Sorin Books, 2000. A classic by a British mother who had two sons with birth defects, one with gargoylism and another with downs syndrome. She speaks about her spiritual journey in loving and caring for them, and the lessons that she learned in doing so. When faced with unavoidable suffering, “we can turn on ourselves or we can grow. The choice is always ours.”
- *Sometimes Amazing Things Happen*, by Dr. Elizabeth Ford, Regan Arts, April 2017. Dr. Ford, a forensic psychiatrist tells of her work among mentally ill prisoners at Bellevue Hospital in New York City. Very well written and hard to put down.
- *Punished – Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*, by Victor M. Rios, New York University Press, 2011. Study by a UC Santa Barbara Latino professor who grew up in the inner city of Oakland, and who now does research on boys who are discriminated against as he was. Very well done.
- *A Failure of Nerve – Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, by Edward H. Friedman, Seabury Books, 2007. Had a hard time with some of the concepts on leadership he espouses: leaders shouldn't have empathy for those they lead. They should be “self-differentiated” and work on themselves rather than paying attention to others. Other concepts were interesting and wise. Will take some more pondering.
- *Insane Consequences – How the Mental Health industry Fails the Mentally Ill*, by DJ Jaffe, Prometheus Books, 2017. An important book that probably will be influential. He rightly points out that the system as it is currently set up leaves the most seriously mentally ill with the worst access to mental health care - with the result that the streets are filled with mentally ill people. His solution is more AOT, the return of mental hospitals, less legal rights for mentally ill people, and other similar measures. Filled with statistics. He has many good points, but I don't buy all of his solutions. His basic argument is that some mentally ill people won't get better, and they need to be medicated by force if necessary or put into hospitals. There is a slippery slope to this philosophy.
- *Becoming Ms. Burton: From Prison to Recovery to Leading the Fight for Incarcerated Women*, by Susan Burton and Cari Lynn, The New Press, 2017. Amazing life story of a woman who was in a revolving door with drug abuse and prison, who finally breaks the cycle and now tries to help other women who are incarcerated make it on the outside. **Recommended.**
- *Nothing Gold Can Stay – the colors of grief*, by Mark Belletini, Skinner House Books, 2015. A series of poignant essays about different aspects of grief. A good book to share with someone who is grieving.
- *Max: A Novel*, by Howard Fast, Open Road Integrated Media, 1982. Entertaining story of the life of a poor Jewish boy in New York, who becomes the head of a movie studio, then loses it all.
- *Building Taliesin: Frank Lloyd Wright's Home of Love and Loss*, by Ron McCrea, Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2012. Story of the building of Talieson, the summer home of Frank Lloyd Wright in

Wisconsin, and of the tragic murder of his mistress Mamah Borthwick, her children, and others when the house was intentionally burned down.

Personal

- Need to continually work at life balance, stress and depression management. This is going successfully and is sometimes easier than others. Trying to learn how to make stress an ally.
- Work out at 24-Hour Fitness 2 times a week.
- Ran in a 10K race at Quarry Lakes in Fremont April 29, 2017. Took 1st place in my age group.

Other

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

2017 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 2017	Took <i>Strategic Non Violent Resistance for Ministers</i> Feb-March 2017
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June	June 2017	Event attended	Attended GA in New Orleans
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31	Attended by Dec. 2017	Will attend Alternatives in August.
Mental Health Ministry	Discern next actions in support of mental health	Chosen by March 31	Activity underway by Dec 2017	Will work with the eCPR program as a facilitator
Racial Justice	Discern actions in support of racial justice	Chosen by March 31	Activity underway by Dec 2017	Focus on racism in the mental health system
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Disability Credentialing Program	Lead the group which will administer the AIM certification program for UUA congregations.	On-going	New congregations sign up for the program	We have 8 congregations signed up. 3 pilots have completed the program
Spiritual Direction	Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice	On-going		No progress
Long term possibilities				
Plan for sabbatical	Plan for ministerial sabbatical of 6 months	Don't know when	Rethink this after Zach is older.	