

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

December 2016

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

High-lights

- Continue helping care for both grandsons.
- The vast numbers of people responding to get active in social justice issues since the election is very impressive and hopeful.
- School District student stress committee participation
- Personal “Calling” to do something about Racism. Have joined a number of efforts and am discerning where I can best contribute.

Challenges

- Keeping from being over committed.
- Discerning how to respond effectively to the Trump election

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Took the on-line class “*Schizophrenia: The Revolution in Treatment*” from Ahealth.com. Good news about treatments for schizophrenia which focus on early identification, low doses of medication and family therapy. Much better long term results than the standard therapy of mega-doses of medication after someone has a full-fledged psychotic break, and without family involvement. I see this as **VERY** hopeful and promising if it becomes the standard treatment.
- Attended 1-day class on *Disarming the Suicidal Mind: Evidence-Based Assessment and Intervention*, taught by Dr. Timothy Spruill, October 20, 2016. Excellent class. Interesting conclusion: The most effective thing to do in helping a person who is suicidal is to find something to like about them, and listen to them with authenticity, empathy and compassion.
- I have participated in weekly conference calls with the group “*We Say Enough,*” which has been a real plunge into African American history and studies with some very fine minds.
- Arranged for and attended a workshop on Dream Work with Rev. Dr. Jeremy Taylor, Sept 30 – October 1, 2016. There is possible interest in starting a dream group at MPUUC.
- Attended one day Fred Pryor Seminar on “Understanding, Analyzing and Using Financial Statements” on December 6, 2016. Very useful information.
- Attended webinar on *Women, Trauma and Addiction*, sponsored by the Foundations Recovery Network, October 25, 2016. Excellent presentation on how women respond to trauma, and the importance of connection and relationship to recovery.
- Attended webinar from Auburn Seminary on “*What's Going On!*” -- *Getting active in the age of Trump*, December 8, 2016. This webinar introduced forthcoming workshops for people who have not yet been professionally or personally deeply involved in social action before, and want to link up with a community of people who are collectively responding to the call to be more active.
- Attended webinar on *WRAP for the Holidays* on December 15. Mary Ellen Copeland with a lot of good advice for the holidays.

Healing

Counseling Center

Almost completed closing down counseling center.

Fremont Unified School District

Started to work with Fremont Unified School District to help students who are under excessive stress.

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

- Began work to start an 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 October 5, 2016. It focused on the use of art in spiritual direction – fascinating, something like art therapy.

Priestly

- Helped lead a service on *Dream Work* with Rev. Dr. Jeremy Taylor on October 2. Gave a homily on how psychosis is like a dream experience, using my own psychotic experience.

Social Justice

Community Awareness

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

Racial Justice

So far:

- I've joined the national and local NAACP
- I've joined Showing Up For Racial Justice, a group for whites interested in being allies.
- I have participated in weekly conference calls with We Say Enough, and will continue to follow their activities
- I participated in a 3-month weekly Racist Anonymous meeting at Niles Discovery Church. Will keep on meeting with the group on a monthly basis.

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 Soul of Money: Reclaiming the Wealth of Our Inner Resources*, by Lynne Twist with Teresa Barker, W.W. Norton & Company, 2003. Passionate treatise on the wisdom of using your money to do things that you believe in. **Recommended.**
- *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf*, A Choreopoem, by Ntozake Shange, 1976, updated in 2010. A set of poems to be accompanied by dance movements and music, that tell the story of Black women in the US. Many topics are addressed - abortion, domestic violence, rape, abandonment, domestic violence, love sisterhood – in vernacular language. Stunning.
- *Twelve Steps to Spiritual Health*, by David Usher, The Lindsey Press, 2013. A slim volume that talks about the importance of spiritual health, and gives 12 ways that it can be cultivated. Good ideas for the spirituality group at Reaching Across.
- *The Sellout*, by Ned Beatty, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015. Racial satire about a black man who tries to reinstitute slavery in an enclave in LA. Winner of the Man Booker Prize.
- *How To Be Black*, by Baratunde Thurston, Harper Collins, 2012. Written by a comedian, a satire about being black, with such chapters as “How Black are You?”, “How to Speak for All Black People”, “Can You Swim?” Entertaining, funny, upbeat and sad at the same time.
- *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay, Harper Collins, 2014. Essays by African American writer, professor, editor and commentator. Subjects: feminism, race, gender, sexuality and current culture. A wonderful writer and thinker. I think I would like her if I met her in person.
- *A Man Called Ove – A Novel*, by Fredrik Backman, Washington Square Press, 2015. Very enjoyable, poignant book about a Swedish curmudgeon named Ove who wants to die after his beloved wife dies and he is laid off of work, but keeps finding useful things to do with his life. Hard to put down. Made me cry.
- *When I'm Gone – A Novel*, by Emily Bleeker, Lake Union Publishing, 2016. A woman dies from cancer and her husband begins receiving letters she wrote before she died, which gradually reveal part of a secret she never shared with him.
- *The Mission the Rocked Olde Plimoth: An Olympia Brown Mystery*, by Judith Campbell Mainly Murder Press, 2016. Another entertaining mystery by and about a UU minister. This one focuses on prostitution.
- *QB – My Life Behind the Spiral*, by Steve Young, with Jeff Benedict, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016. The famous 49er quarterback tells of his football life and the serious separation anxiety he suffered from. Either he has an encyclopedic memory for every play of every game, or he (or his co-author) watched replays while writing the book.

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.
- Had a lot of pleasure finishing two sewing projects.

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	
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June	June 2017	Event attended	
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	
Mental Health Ministry	Discern next actions in support of mental health	Chosen by March 31	Activity underway by Dec 2017	
Racial Justice	Discern actions in support of racial justice	Chosen by March 31	Activity underway by Dec 2017	
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	
Spiritual Direction	Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice	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	