

# Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

**June 2013**

## **Status of ministry since last Report**

### **Notes of Particular Importance**

#### **Joys**

- Status of three new initiatives of my ministry
  1. Interfaith Counseling Center. Will hold first Board meeting in July. Jewish synagogue signed on as supporting congregation. Made progress in putting together Board.
  2. UU Congregational Disability Certification Program. Handbook went to copy editor. Picked 9 field test congregations, and announced them at General Assembly.
  3. Short story-oriented videos – Completed 9 videos. Funding agency is deciding whether to continue this work.
- Helping care for my grandson Nathaniel (Natey) King one day a week

#### **Challenges**

- Keeping from being over committed.

#### **Education**

##### *Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned*

- Webinar: SAMHSA's Wellness Initiative Webinar, "Springing into Wellness and Planting the Financial Wellness Seed", April 30, 2013. Very good financial planning advice for people on limited income.
- Webinar: "Transcending the Double Closet of Wealth and Substance Abuse" May 2, 2013. 1<sup>st</sup> closet=substance abuse. 2<sup>nd</sup> closet = interpersonal fortress of wealth. Beliefs that Money = Power, Freedom, Security, Love, can cause personal problems and problems in relation to therapists. Concept of "wealthism": hostility toward people who have wealth.
- Workshop - *Stories Between Us - How to create a community oral history project in a UU Congregation*, Starr King School for the Ministry, Saturday, May 2, 10 - 4 pm, Leader: Lena Rebecca Richardson. Excellent! Got lots of good ideas.
- On June 2, with three other women, visited the Awakening Forest hermitage for Buddhist women monks on the Sonoma Coast. An enchanting place with lovely, dedicated people.

#### **Healing**

##### *Counseling Center*

Interfaith Counseling Center. Will hold first Board meeting in July. Jewish synagogue signed on as supporting congregation. Made progress in putting together Board. Will attend Samaritan Center conference in Denver in August.

##### *Reaching Across*

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

##### *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***

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

### ***Mental Health Committee***

- Activities complete:
  - April – Autism Event: Worship Service
  - April - Ohlone Suicide Walk
  - June 1 - NAMI Walk with 9 others from Mission Peak. Raised over \$1000 for NAMI causes!
- Activities planned:
  - July - Service on Mental Health: "Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy".

### ***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. One person has finished her second year, and the other has finished her first year.
- Serving as informal mentor to a prospective mental health community minister doing an internship in Berkeley.

### ***Spiritual Direction***

- Have two spiritual direction clients. This is very fulfilling work for me.

### **Priestly**

- April 7, 2013–Worship Service: “On the Spectrum”
- May 5, 2013 – Guest speaker at Niles Discovery Church on “Nature, Theology, and Recovery from Mental Health Problems”

### **Social Justice**

#### ***Community Awareness***

- Nine short “focused story” videos have now appeared on YouTube, to universally positive acclaim.
- *Mental Health Matters* Public Access TV Show continues in the capable hands of my co-producer, Shannon Eliot.
- 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. Certification document created. Incorporation of comments on earlier draft underway.
- Continued to maintain the website for the new UU accessibility group *Equal Access* [www.equalaccess.org](http://www.equalaccess.org)

#### ***UUA Addictions Ministry***

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

### **Other**

#### ***Books Read***

- *Moving on from Church Folly Lane – The Pastoral to Program Shift*, by Rev. Robert T. Latham, Wheatmark, 2006. Helpful resource for our congregation as we plan to grow.
- *After the Fact – The Surprising Fates of American Heroes, Villains, and Supporting Characters* by Owen J Hurd, Perigee, 2012. Lots of entertaining stories of what happened

after well known American historical events: ex: Paul Revere, Lewis and Clark, Poe, Harriett Tubman, John Brown, Mrs. O’Leary, Samuel Morse, Eliot Ness, Rosa Parks,...

- *Care of the Soul – A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life*, by Thomas Moore, Harper Collins Publishers, 1992. How to live life giving the soul “time and opportunity to reveal itself, by living life in a way that fosters the depth, interiority and quality in which it flourishes.” This involves being more intuitive than rational and to find art in our every day surroundings and life.
- *Soul Repair – Recovering from Moral Injury after War*, by Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, Beacon Press, 2012. Examines what happens to soldiers morally after they have taken part in war. What we need to do as a society to help heal them and ourselves.
- *Disability Awareness – Do it Right – Tips, techniques and handouts for a successful Awareness Day*, Mary Johnson, Editor, Ragged Edge Online Community, Avocado Press, 2006. How to hold a Disability Awareness Day. Lots of sage and passionate advice about what works and what doesn’t work. One message: “Disability simulations can be harmful.”
- *The Mind’s Eye* by Oliver Sacks, Vintage, 2010. I think I’ve read all of neurologist Oliver Sacks interesting books on how abnormalities in the human brain can lead to unusual behavior. This book focuses on how vision can be affected.
- *Stories Between Us – Oral Histories from a Countercultural Congregation – Plus a guide to creating your own oral history project*, Edited by Lena Rebecca Richardson, 2012. The experience of collecting stories from elders in the Berkeley Fellowship of UUs. This was the text for a workshop that I took at Starr King School for the Ministry, and it gave me lots of ideas on how I could use some of the ideas in telling stories in my own work.
- *When “Spiritual But Not Religious” is Not Enough – Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even the Church*, by Lillian Daniel, Jericho Books, 2013. Essays written with wit and wisdom by a UCC minister.
- *Make Them Go Away: Clint Eastwood, Christopher Reeve and The Case Against Disability Rights*, by Mary Johnson, The Avocado Press, 2003. How the ADA has been undermined at every level of law and of society. A challenging, strident, and disturbing case for disability rights activism.
- *Gulp: Adventures in the Alimentary Canal*, by Mary Roach, W.W. Norton, 2013. Funny, engaging and sometimes disgusting look at the human digestive system from beginning to end.
- *Without Conscience – The Disturbing World of the Psychopaths Among Us*, by Robert D. Hare, PhD, The Guilford Press, 1993. A thorough and chilling look at psychopathology, how it can be accurately diagnosed, the implications for society and for people who share their lives with psychopaths. What was hardest for me to learn is that they are basically untreatable.
- *The Spiritual Gift of Madness: The Failure of Psychiatry and the Rise of the Mad Pride Movement*, by Seth Farber, PhD, Inner Traditions, 2012. Therapist who doesn’t believe in medication, and believes that all or nearly all madness has a spiritual component that can be a gift.
- *Blink – The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, by Malcolm Gladwell, Back Bay Books, 2005. Fascinating story of how the unconscious mind can make judgments in 2-3 seconds, and when these conclusions are helpful and unhelpful.
- *A Deadly Mission*, by Judith Campbell, Mainly Murder Press, LLC, 2010. A mystery written by a UU minister. Engaging and suspenseful.

### **Personal**

- Need to continually work at life balance, stress and depression management.

- Keeping up my exercise at the gym *Curves*, and work out there 3 times a week. Keeps up my energy level.
- Ran in 5K race at Mt. Diablo on April 30. Came in second in my age range.

***Other***

- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee every quarter
- Monthly status meetings with UU Mental Health Caucus, Equal Access
- Visit my spiritual director and my psychiatrist regularly.
- Attended most MPUUC Board meetings.

## 2013 Development Plan

Area	Plans	Time line	Measurement	Status
<b>Continuing education:</b>				
Take one or two classes a year	Investigate classes to take in this year	Ongoing- Identify classes	Take classes by December 2013	SKSM workshop taken
Attend GA	GA in June	June 2013	Event attended	Attended GA as a chaplain
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31	Attended by Dec. 2013	Attended WRAP and CASRA conferences
Help in starting new counseling center	Attend meetings and engage in planning to start new center	Throughout 2013	New center is created.	Attending meetings every 2 weeks. See progress.
<b>Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:</b>				
Create short format mental health videos	Plan is to improve the video audience	Tape one video per month.	Ongoing	Have taped 9 videos.
Disability Credentialing Program	Lead credentialing program for UUA congregations	Time line established. Field test by June 2013	Program created	Handbook complete. Field test sites chosen.
Preaching style	Work on preaching with feedback from parishioners and other professionals	As speaking engagements show up	Style continues to improve.	Signed up for UUMA preaching mentor.
Spiritual Direction	Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice	On-going		One new client from SKSM referral.
<b>Long term possibilities</b>				
Create on-line course for ministers to teach about mental health.	Apply for a grant to fund creating the course	Apply for grant in 2 years.	Grant applied for and approved.	