

Community Ministry Status
For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

September 2014

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

- High-lights
 1. Interfaith Counseling Center.
 2. UU Congregational Disability Certification Program.
 3. Short story-oriented videos –
- Helping care for my grandson Nathaniel (Natey) King one day a week, new grandson expected in January
- Applied for UUMA program in Entrepreneurial Ministry. Will hear on October 15.
- Exercise schedule going well.

Challenges

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

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- *Webinar: Entrepreneurial Ministry* Information about the UUMA's new program that I'm considering signing up for. July 16.

Healing

Counseling Center

- Held monthly Board meetings. Increased religious diversity of the board with Muslim participants. Close to completing negotiations for building.
- Chalice Lighter Grant proposal to the PCD earned us \$8,961.74.
- Two Grants from UUA Funding Program awarded totaling \$7,175.00.
- Faithify grant funded at \$10,000.
- All money that MPUUC was holding for the Counseling Center has been transferred out of MPUUC accounts and deposited in the Connections bank account. Transferred total was \$9,525.96.
- Anonymous donor gave \$111,000 to Connections.

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

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

Mental Health Committee

Held yearly planning meeting. Plans are:

October – Publicize the Mental Health and Spirituality Conference October 9-10 held at the Allen Temple Family Life Center in Oakland

November – Solicit new referrals from MPUUC and Reaching Across for therapists, psychiatrists, and other programs

December – Participate in the NAMI Christmas gift wrap at John George

January – Jointly with NAMI, hold a NAMI forum for church members and the community to tell what NAMI chapters in Alameda County are doing

February – Movie Night – A movie about PTSD with a panel discussion afterward

March – Barbara gives a sermon on PTSD, inviting a testimonial from a consumer

April – Publicize the Ohlone College Suicide Walk

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 doing an internship in St. Louis.

Spiritual Direction

- Have one spiritual direction client. This is very fulfilling work for me.

Priestly

- August 17: On Book read “Behind the Kitchen Door”

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- Started monthly production of my own YouTube videos using my own equipment. Series is entitled: “Faces of Hope and Resilience.” Funding to cover this expense is part of the Reaching Across budget request for this fiscal year.
- *Mental Health Matters* Public Access TV continues under new management, with fewer shows.
- 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. 8 Field Test congregations now have the handbook and a UUA administrator, who I am supervising, is on board and doing a great job.
- 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

- *Love and Death – My Journey Through the Valley of the Shadow*, by Forrest Church, Beacon Press, 2008. Written by Rev. Forrest Church a prominent UU minister who knew he was dying and who died in 2009. Summarizing all of his wisdom for posterity.
- *Being Alive and Having to Die – The Spiritual Odyssey of Forrest Church*, by Dan Cryer, St. Martin's Press, 2011. Sympathetic biography of Rev. Forrest Church.
- *The Aviator's Wife – A Novel*, by Melanie Benjamin, Random House, 2013. This is a work of historical fiction about Ann Morrow Lindberg, told from her point of view. Interesting insights into Charles Lindberg's character as well as hers.
- *Stay – A History of Suicide and the Philosophies Against It*, by Jennifer Michael Hecht, Yale University Press, 2013. This book pulls together the history of suicide primarily in western culture, and lays out all the main reasons not to complete this act.
- *Silent Voices – People with Mental Disorders on the Street*, by Robert L. Okin, MD, Golden Pine Press, 2014. Written by a psychiatrist who led SF General's psych department, this is a remarkable book that has homeless people tell their own stories. They tell it like it is. Also includes an excellent guide on how the mental health system for indigent people in the US got so bad, and some ideas on how it might be fixed.
- *Deeply Woven Roots – Improving the Quality of Life in Your Community*, by Gary Gunderson, Fortress Press, 1997. A study of what healthy congregations do: Accompany, Convene, Connect, Tell Stories, Give Sanctuary, Bless, Pray and Endure. Good summary. Somewhat boring.
- *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness – Liberal Religion in the Public Square*, by Paul Rasor, Skinner House Books, 2012. Why it is important for religious liberals to be active in public life. 2014 UUA Book Read.

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.
- Ran a half-marathon on July 5, and several other half marathons, 5K and 10K runs.

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.

2014 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 2014	Took <i>DSM5 In Plain English</i>
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June	June 2014	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. 2014	Attended <i>Tools for Change</i> in March 2014
Help in starting new counseling center	Attend meetings as member of the board of the new center	Throughout 2014	New center is created.	Initial actions are continuing. One grant was obtained.
Create on-line course for ministers to teach about mental health.	Work with another person who will create the class	Throughout 2014	Course created or near completion in Dec 2014	Three people working on this.
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Create short format mental health videos	Plan is to improve the video audience	Tape one video per month.	Ongoing	PEERS videos complete RA videos started in April
Disability Credentialing Program	Lead credentialing program for UUA congregations	Field test continues	Field test continues successfully	Field test sites turning in their plans
Preaching style	Retained the help of a preaching coach. Great results so far.	Coaching through June.	Style continues to improve.	Lots of positive comments after coaching.
Spiritual Direction	Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice. Presentation on Spiritual Direction at District Assembly	On-going		
Long term possibilities				
Plan for sabbatical	Plan for ministerial sabbatical of 6 months	Probably in 2016 after Nate is in kindergarten	Create possible scenarios by Dec 2014	