

# Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2009

## Status of ministry since last Report

### Education

#### *Classes and Seminars Given*

- Organized and led a workshop on April 8 at Starr King School for the Ministry on “Journeying into Community Ministry.” Prepared extensive handout for class, and organized presentations from 7 community ministers.
- Prepared training for monthly Pastoral Associates meetings.
- Distributed my document *Mental Health Information for Ministers* to 50 ministers and seminarians. The document has brief descriptions of the major mental disorders with specific suggestions of what a minister can do.
- Presented a paper entitled *Mental Health Information for Ministers* at the 2009 Northern California Mental Health & Spirituality Conference on June 1-2 in Oakland. Also at this conference, I served on a panel that gave responses to the keynote speech.

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

- Attended web training from CA Faith for Equality on *Truth to Power: Training in Non-Violent Direct Action*, on April 2.
- Attended training by Michael Tompkins, Ph.D. sponsored by the Mental Health Association of San Francisco on *Digging Out: Helping Your Loved One Manage Clutter, Hoarding, and Compulsive Acquiring*, May 26.
- Attended a training by Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services on *Motivational Interviewing* which is a client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence on May 28.
- Attended the UUA General Assembly in Salt Lake City as a delegate on June 22-28. It was very inspiring and I got some new ideas for reviewing my ministry. A number of important resolutions were debated, including a change to the principles and sources of the UU faith.
- I plan to attend NAMI’s National Convention in San Francisco July 6-9.

#### *Retreats Attended*

Attended a retreat workshop on April 30-May 1 by Dr. Marcia McFee on "Creating Worship With Deep Soul" as part of a continuing education program for Unitarian Universalist ministers in the Pacific Central District. She had many interesting ideas all of which I didn't buy. But some of it was helpful and I will choose to use it when I think it would be appropriate.

### Healing

#### *Reaching Across*

Continued compensated job at Reaching Across organization, for quarter-time work. Attend Monday support group meetings, two Interfaith Support Groups per month, most Wednesday group activities, 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*

- Continue to prepare training materials for Pastoral Associates at the monthly meetings. Made several calls/visits to congregational members, at home and in hospital.

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

- The autobiographical play by Gail Marlene Schwartz called *Crazy: One Woman's Search for Sanity* was shown on April 18 at MPUUC. It was presented on a pro bono basis and was a successful fund raiser.
- NAMI Walk had a group from MPUUC walking. Made a faith endorsement for NAMI Walk.

### **Priestly**

- Worship leader on May 24 at Livermore on the subject of "We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For"
- Officiated at the wedding of Erin Foret and Brandon Grimes in May 23 in Briones Regional Park.
- Attended monthly Pastoral Associates meetings, and prepared training for each meeting.
- Continued being a mentor to a UU community minister in preliminary fellowship. Monthly meetings.

### **Social Justice**

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

- *Mental Health Matters* Public Access TV Show
  - Taped shows on: Alternative Medicine in April, Latino Mental Health in May and Mental Health in Difficult Economic Times in June.
  - Topics for the next shows are: Holistic Mental Health Care, Famous People with Mental Illness, and Youth.
  - Shows continue to be broadcast throughout Alameda County on Comcast TV as well as being available from anywhere on the internet.
- Mental Health pages on MPUUC web site continue to be widely accessed.

#### ***UUA Accessibility Group***

- Maintained the website for the new UU accessibility group *Equal Access*. Take a look at: [www.equualaccess.org](http://www.equualaccess.org)
- Mental Health Caucus under the auspices of Equal Access. Status: we have bi-monthly conference calls prioritizing activities and some of us plan to meet at General Assembly.

### **Other**

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

- Ken Wilber, Jack Engler and Daniel Brown, Editors. *Transformations of Consciousness – Conventional and Contemplative Perspectives on Development*, Boston: New Science Library, 1986. Especially chapters on *The Spectrum of Development*, *The Spectrum of Pathology*, and *Treatment Modalities*. Fascinating discussion on how the self develops in different stages, what can go wrong at each stage, and how to treat each pathology.
- *My Lobotomy – A Memoir*, by Howard Dully and Charles Fleming, New York: Crown Publishers, 2007. The harrowing story of a boy who was given a lobotomy at the age of 12 by famed lobotomist Dr. Walter Freeman, when his main problem was that he didn't get along with his step mother.
- *Outliers – The Story of Success*, by Malcolm Gladwell, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008. A fascinating account of what factors make some people successful and others not. Ex: Most excellent hockey players are born in January, February or March, because the beginning of the year is the birthday cut-off point for starting hockey training for young boys; the oldest, biggest boys born in the first 3 months will do the best.
- *The Resilient Spirit – Transforming Suffering into Insight and Renewal*, by Polly Young-Eisendrath PhD., Cambridge Mass: Perseus Publishing, 1996. Factors that make people resilient are identified: empathy, flexibility, creativity, humor, and wisdom.

- *Resilient Adults – Overcoming a Cruel Past*, by Gina O’Connell Higgins, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994. Looks at the question of why some people are able to overcome a very abusive childhood.
- *The Perennial Philosophy*, by Aldous Huxley, New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1945. A classic introduction to the characteristics central to religious thought throughout the world. Particularly an introduction for the western world to mysticism and Eastern philosophy.
- *Cosmic Consciousness – A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind*, by Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D., New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1901. A classic, pioneering, modern study of the mystical experience. Prompted by his firsthand experience, the author explores the phenomenon of transcendent realization, or illumination.
- *Callings – Finding and Following an Authentic Life*, by Gregg Levoy. New York: Harmony Books, 1997. Explores the search for authenticity in examining the many kinds of calls we receive - the big vocations that direct our lives but also all the smaller vocations we need to answer to.
- *Noticing the Divine – An Introduction to Interfaith Spiritual Guidance* by John R. Mabry. This is a text for the spiritual directors certificate program I have enrolled in.

### ***Personal***

- Had a week-long wonderful, restful vacation in April to New Mexico with Tom and my father.
- Need to continually work at life balance and stress management.
- Completed a weaving, a complex honey-comb pattern for the Rahmans.
- I have applied to a program to get a certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Chaplaincy Institute in Berkeley. It starts in July, and has 4 weeks of classes, 1 week per quarter, for a year, followed by a year of seeing clients under supervision.

### ***Other***

- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee every quarter
- Chaired MPUUC Mental Health Committee which meets every 6-8 weeks
- Attended MPUUC Board meetings in April and May.
- Served as secretary to the Tri Cities Interfaith Council at its monthly meetings.

## 2009 Development Plan

| Area  | Plans   | Time line                           | Measurement  | Status  |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Continuing education:</b>                                    |   |                                     |  |   |
| Take one or two classes a year                                  | Investigate classes to take in the next year                            | Ongoing-<br>Identify classes        | Take classes by December 09                        |   |
| Attend GA and district assemblies.                              | DA in April and GA in June  | April 2009<br>June 2009             | Events attended                                    | Attended DA and GA  |
| Attend Mental health seminars / conventions                     | Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year | Choose by March 1                   | Attended by Dec. 2009                              | Attended Spirituality Conv. June 1-2<br>Registered in NAMI Conv. in SF July 6-9 |
| <b>Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:</b>                      |   |                                     |  |   |
| Continue producing TV program                                   | Work on developing education using DVDs                                 | Identify possible users of programs | People using DVDs for education                    | Some churches starting to use them  |
| Continue working on preaching style                             | Work with preaching professor and drama coach                           | As speaking engagements show up     | Style continues to improve.                        |   |
| Develop minister's guide to mental health and make it available | Make plan for teaching ministers  | Planned to start in April 2009      | Notification of ministers and evaluation of usage. | Preliminary version of Guide developed and in review.                           |
| <b>Long term development plan possibilities:</b>                |   |                                     |  |   |
| Possibly become a Spiritual Director                            | Chaplaincy Inst. Spiritual Director Program                             | Start July 2009                     | Enroll in and start program                        | Enrolled in program   |