

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2012

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

Joys

- Three new initiatives are moving my ministry to the next level
 1. Will start to create short story-oriented videos. Co-producer will continue TV show
 2. Leading effort to create UU Congregational Disability Certification Program
 3. Working to start Interfaith Counseling Center
- Helping care for my grandson Nathaniel (Natey) King one day a week

Challenges

- Keeping from being over committed.

Education

Classes and Seminars Given

- *Mental Health and Spirituality 101*, a class led by Rev. Monique Tarver of P.E.E.R.S., June 30, 2012. I served as one of the cultural brokers for the class, and led part of the presentation.
- With Beth Schaefer, held an event after church July 1, 2012 to listen to the NPR broadcast “*81 Words*” which told the story of how homosexuality was removed as a mental illness from the DSM. Attended by 9 people with an excellent discussion afterwards.

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- One-day class at Starr King School for the ministry, “Loving the Liturgy.” May 24, 2012. Great class introducing a method for worship planning involving themes, music, words, images, motion. Plan to teach this to our worship associates at some point. Let’s try it for 4 worship services I will lead this year.
- SAMHSA webinar "*Understanding and Building on Culture and Spirituality in Recovery-Oriented Practice*" held on 04/04/2012. Excellent presentation by Rev. Laura Mancuso and two others on how important spirituality is to people recovering from mental illness. Specific questions and evaluation criteria were presented.
- Addiction Professional Webinar “*Equal but Different, Top 5 Issues Women Face in Addiction and Recovery*” held on 4/11/2012. Fascinating presentation about why addiction and recovery is different for women than for men
- Addiction Professional Webinar “*Getting to the Heart of Addiction – Intensive Experiential Treatment for High-Functioning Clients*” held on 04/16/2012, with Arnold M. Washton and Michael D. Lukens. CORE Completion, a method of intensive treatment for addiction by addressing the underlying core issues that led to the addiction.
- Addiction Professional Webinar “*Substance Abuse and Families: Treatment Considerations and Supports*” on May 8, 2012. Discussed benefits, challenges, and opportunities with engaging families within treatment of youth for addiction.
- Webinar from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: “*From Rights to Relationships-Social Inclusion in Faith Communities*” May 15, 2011. I like this quote from the presentation: “*Margaret Mead defined an ideal human culture as one in which there is a place for every human gift.*” So true.

- Webinar from PSR's Coalition of Welcoming Congregations of the Bay Area: "*Killing Our Kids With Love: Exploring the ways to support and encourage youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender*" held on May 16, 2012. Excellent summary of what helps and what hurts LGBT teens.
- SAMHSA webinar "Freedom from Tobacco: Providing Education to Support Wellness Lifestyle Changes", 22 May 2012. Latest statistics on health consequences of smoking and techniques for treating smoking addiction among people with mental health problems. Interesting factoids: most smoking cessation drug trials exclude people with mental illness; nicotine nasal sprays + gum + patch works best; forcing people to quit doesn't work; smoking causes some psych meds to be metabolized faster.
- Addiction Professional Webinar "*Sexuality, Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity in Addiction Recovery*", May 30, 2012. A lot of good information about how to make a recovery program effective for LGBT people. The prevalence of addiction in the LGBT population is significantly higher than in heterosexuals.
- Addiction Professional Webinar "*The Pain of Dealing with Pain: What They're Abusing and the Drug Testing Methods that Can Help Deter the Abuse.*" June 13, 2012. Talked about testing using saliva – more accurate, easier to do, hard to get around. Also talked about the very rapid rise in prescription pain drugs.

Healing

Counseling Center

With a group of 5 others, helping to design a counseling center to eventually be affiliated with our congregation. It will be a combination of a traditional counseling center, a healing and spiritual center, and one of the participants in wrap-around services for seriously mentally ill people. I am helping to get nonprofit 501 (c) (3) status for the organization.

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. Attended the Reaching Across appreciation dinner on June 27.

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

- Led training of PAs on May 12

Mental Health Committee

- With the IDC Committee, held a joint event after church July 1, 2012 to listen to the NPR broadcast "81 Words" which told the story of how homosexuality was removed as a mental illness from the DSM. Attended by 9 people with an excellent discussion afterwards.

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.
- Consulted with a seminary student working on a community ministry project.

Spiritual Direction

- Have two spiritual direction clients. This is very fulfilling work for me. I would like to have 4-5 clients

Priestly

- Worship leader on July 1 on the subject of “*The Gift of Presence*”. Got many positive comments afterwards, including some unsolicited feedback that my preaching style has improved a lot.

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- *Mental Health Matters* Public Access TV Show
 - In May, taped show on “*Eating Disorders*.” My co-producer taped shows on “*Wellness Recovery Action Plan*”, “*Shine (A Documentary)*” and “*Laura’s Law (Forced Treatment)*”.
 - Shows broadcast in most of Alameda County on Comcast TV as well as viewable on the internet.
 - Plan to leave this show in the capable hands of my co-producer.
- New Shorter “focused story” Videos
 - Funding and first guests lined up.
 - Start shooting in September
- 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. Held an in-person planning session in June. Set schedule and created press release.
- Continued to maintain the website for the new UU accessibility group *Equal Access* www.equalaccess.org

UUA Addictions Ministry

- As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, helped run their web site and attended an on-line retreat with members of the team.

Occupy Fremont

- Merged efforts with others in Fremont to form an Occupy Fremont group that meets once a week for a General Assembly, and once a month for a larger, decision making assembly.

General Assembly

- Attended a very inspiring “Justice” General Assembly in Phoenix, Arizona in June. All activity focused on immigration and public witness. The most important event was a public witness rally outside the infamous “Tent City” prison attended by thousands of UUs.

Other

Books Read

- *Tuesdays with Morrie – An old man, a young man, and life’s greatest lesson*, by Mitch Albom, Broadway Books, 1997. True story with timeless wisdom from a dying man to his former student. One example: “Mitch, if you’re trying to show off for people at the top, forget it. They will look down at you anyhow. And if you’re trying to show off for people at the bottom, forget it. They will only envy you. Status will get you nowhere. Only an open heart will allow you to float equally between everyone.”
- *Final Gifts – Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs and Communications of the Dying*, by Maggie Callanan and Patricia Kelley, Bantam Books, 1993. Written by two hospice nurses, this wonderful book gives us the benefit of their experience in what kinds of situations commonly occur when people are dying. This would be an immensely helpful gift to families and other care givers.
- *The Search for the Real Self – Unmasking the Personality Disorders of Our Age*, by James F. Masterson, M.D., The Free Press, 1988. Very interesting book about Borderline and Narcissistic Personality Disorders and how they can be successfully treated. The chief claim is that in these disorders, the person’s real self is hidden, and it must be brought out in order to cure the disorder.

- *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God*, by Amos Yong, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011. A first-class scholarly examination of Bible scriptures, re-interpreting them to show that disability is central to the Gospel message.
- *Back to the Basics of Human Health*, by Mary Frost, Expansive Health Awareness, 1997. It is best to eat healthy food to get vitamins and minerals you need, and not rely on vitamin pills.
- *Thunderstruck*, by Erik Larson, Crown Publishers, 2006. The intertwining stories of Marconi's invention of the radio and the murder of Belle Elmore by her husband Dr. Crippen. Well-written and hard to put down.
- *Drown*, by Junot Diaz, Riverhead Books, 1986. Collection of 10 short stories from the hardscrabble youth of a Dominican American family. One of the books purged from Arizona libraries. Arizona law makes it illegal to teach ethnic studies, or any other course that promotes "resentment of another class of people" or "ethnic solidarity." The state Superintendent of schools ordered the Tucson School Board to remove from classrooms nearly 100 books that allegedly contravene these standards. As an act of defiance, UU ministers were recruited to legally "smuggle" in these contraband books during GA. This book is the one I am "smuggling" in.
- *Season of the Witch – Enchantment, Terror, and Deliverance in the City of Love*, by David Talbot, Free Press, Simon and Schuster, 2012. The story of San Francisco in the years 1965-1985 beautifully written and hard to put down. I remember many of the events described in the book, and it is fascinating to read of them over 40 years later.
- *Moneyball – The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*, by Michael Lewis, Norton & Company, 2003. The story about how Billy Beane the general manager of the Oakland A's assembled a winning team from undervalued players by using statistics. Fascinating. The movie is good, too.

Personal

- Need to continually work at life balance and stress management. This has gotten easier since Nathaniel.
- Keeping up my exercise at the gym *Curves*, and work out there 3 times a week. Keeps up my energy level.

Other

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

2012 Development Plan

| Area | Plans | Time line | Measurement | Status |
|---|---|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Continuing education: | | | | |
| Take one or two classes a year | Investigate classes to take in the next year | Ongoing- Identify classes | Take classes by December 2012 | Many on-line classes taken |
| Attend GA | GA in June | June 2012 | Event attended | Attended GA |
| Attend Mental health seminars / conventions | Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year | Chosen by March 31 | Attended by Dec. 2012 | |
| Help in starting new counseling center | Attend meetings and engage in planning to start new center | Throughout 2012 | Plans for new center are created. | Attending meetings every 2 weeks |
| Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs: | | | | |
| Create short format mental health videos | Plan is to improve the video audience | Plan to start this in September and tape one video per month. | Ongoing | Funding and first guests committed. |
| Disability Credentialing Program | Lead credentialing program for UUA congregations | Time line established. Field test by June 2013 | Program created | Schedule established. People on board. |
| Preaching style | Work on preaching with feedback from parishioners and other professionals | As speaking engagements show up | Style continues to improve. | Comments by congregants that my style has improved. |
| Spiritual Direction | Continue to grow Spiritual Direction practice | On-going | Would like 4-5 clients by year end | Have 2 clients |
| Long term possibilities | | | | |
| 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. | |