

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara Meyers

September 2008

Status of ministry since last Report

Education

Caring Congregation

San Diego Congregation to have me to do guest workshops October 17-18.

Classes and Seminars Given

- Gave a workshop on “Using Public Access TV to Advocate for Mental Health” at the NAMI California Conference on August 23 in Burlingame. It was very favorably attended.
- Spoke at the Summer Forum of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley on mental health ministry and the Caring Congregation

Classes and Seminars Taken

- *Care of Self: The Care Giver's Mental Health* at The Wayne E. Oates Institute of Online learning. July 7-25. Based on information learned in this class, I will plan to take a drumming workshop in the near future.
- *Working with the Media to Support the Campaign for Mental Health Recovery*, conducted by SAMHSA Resource Center Resource Center to Promote Acceptance, Dignity and Social Inclusion Associated with Mental Health, webcast seminar.
- *Mental Health & Women in the Military: Promoting Social Acceptance and Inclusion*, August 6, 2008, SAMHSA Acceptance, Dignity and Social Inclusion Center.

County Education Effort Continues

Plans have been made to have a state-wide Mental Health and Spirituality Conference in spring 2009. I have been going to some of the meetings and will participate in this as much as I can with my other activities.

Healing

Reaching Across

Continued compensated job at Reaching Across organization, for quarter-time work.. This involves several support groups, a weekly craft group, other group activities and individual support.

Support Groups

- Continued co-leading new 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 visits to congregational members with mental health problems, at home and in the hospital.

Mental Health Committee

- Sang to patients at the psych ward at Eden Hospital in August.

Priestly

- Worship associate on July 27.

- Worship leader on August 3 on “Letting Go.”
- Worship associate on August 10.

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- Mental Health Matters Public Access TV Show
 - Taped shows on: Co-Occurring Disorders in July, Asian Mental Health in August.
 - Topics for the next shows are: Mental Health in Jail/Prison, Trauma, First Break, and Anxiety.
 - 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.

Participated in Alameda County Mental Health Services Act Planning Council

The Prevention and Early Intervention portfolio of the county MHSA plan underwent a series of public reviews and was sent to the state for approval. One of the programs funded is a media-oriented program featuring the TV show that I produce.

UUA Accessibility Group

- The new UU accessibility group *Equal Access* will have an in-person meeting in Boston on September 5-7. Will plan the next two years for the organization.
- Started a Mental Health Caucus under the auspices of Equal Access. There are currently 18 people in this caucus and we have started conference calls.

Other

Books Read

- *Love is Letting Go of Fear* by Gerald G. Jampolsky, Berkeley: Celestial Arts, 1979. An inspirational classic since it was first written, it remains one of the seminal works in the transpersonal movement.
- *From Bedlam to Shalom: Towards a Practical Theology of Human Nature, Interpersonal Relationships, and Mental Health Care*, by John Swinton, Peter Lang Publishing, 2000. Swinton gives a theological definition of mental health which I like very much:

Mental health is not simply the absence of psychological distress or malfunction. Mental Health is the strength to:

 - live as a human being, maintaining holistic relationships with God, self, others and creation, and to
 - continue moving towards the restoration of the sacred within, irrespective of one's circumstances.
- *Souls in the Hands of a Tender God – Stories of the Search for Home and Healing on the Streets*, by Craig Rennebohm with David Paul, Boston: Beacon Press, 2008.
- *War and the Soul – Healing Our Nation’s Veterans from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder*, by Edward, Tick, Ph.D., Wheaton, Illinois: Quest Books, 2005.
- *Far from Home – Shattering the Myth of the Model Minority*, by Mary Chung Hayashi, Irving Texas: Tapestry Press, 2003. The story of Mary Hayashi, assemblywoman from Hayward about her crusade for Asian women’s health, inspired by the suicide of her older sister at age 16.
- *Unstuck – You Guide to the Seven-Stage Journey Out of Depression*, by James S. Gordon, M.D., New York: The Penguin Press, 2008. Although this book has many good ideas about living with depression, it errs in my opinion in advancing a Tom Cruise-like view of medications: you don’t need them, you just need vitamins and exercise. I know this is not true of many people, including me, and because of this, I do not highly recommend the book for people with serious mental health problems.

- *Teacher Man*, by Frank McCourt, New York: Scribner, 2005. The story of Frank McCourt's life as a teacher in New York City. Witty, meaningful, and touching, this book is highly recommended in its lessons on how to reach teenagers, and how to find out what really matters.

Books Reviewed Prior to Publication:

- I wrote an enthusiastic review for the forthcoming book: *When the Mind Takes Ill: What Your Community Can Do*, by Larry Hayes, to be published in 2008-09. This will be an excellent resource, chock full of ideas for people and groups who want to take community action with respect to mental health issues.

Personal

- Rest, weave, exercise
- I have tentatively decided to pursue a certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Chaplaincy Institute in Berkeley. It would start next summer and have 4 weeks of classes, 1 week per quarter, for a year. It also involves getting a spiritual director for myself, which I welcome.

Other

- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee every quarter
- Chaired MPUUC Mental Health Committee which meets every 6-8 weeks
- Met with Committee on Ministry from MPUUC monthly
- Met with other UU community ministers every 2 months

2008 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	Identify class by March 1	Take class by December 08	Taken 2 classes
Attend GA and district assemblies.	DA in April and GA in June	April 2008 June 2008	Events attended	Presented at DA Attended 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. 2008	Attended Client convention in Feb
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Continue to support the new mental health support groups	Work on advertising, reaching possible local and interfaith audiences	Plan evaluated/ developed by March 2007	More people come and stay in groups	In progress
Continue working on preaching style	Work with preaching professor and drama coach	As speaking engagements show up	Style continues to improve.	In progress
Increase support and growth of Caring Congregation curriculum	Set into action self-sustaining structure. Conduct more teach-the-teachers. Develop intersession / intensive version of the course.	Carry out self-sustaining structure	Structure set up and used and evaluated.	NYC Training held in March. Became a Center Presenter for all UUMA chapters education.
Long term development plan possibilities:				
Possibly become a Spiritual Director	Chaplaincy Institute, Mercy Center, Shalem Institute	Maybe start June 2009	Programs investigated.	Probably: Chaplaincy Inst. Spiritual Director Program
Possible D.Min. at Pacific School of Religion	Understand requirements for the program at PSR	At least 2 years away	Make a decision by Dec 2007 whether to pursue DMin.	Decided to put this decision off for a year or 2