

Community Ministry Status

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

September 2011

Status of ministry since last Report

Notes of Particular Importance

- **Joys**
 - Feeling fulfilled in this important life-work
 - Helping care for my grandson Nathaniel King one day a week
 - More mental health ministries starting up in UU congregations
 - Weaving chosen for Interfaith Art Exhibit
- **Challenges**
 - Getting more of the congregation to interact with the mental health ministry.
 - Getting some Spiritual Directions Clients

Education

Classes and Seminars Given

- Plan to lead two mental health workshops at the Shoreline, WA UU Church on October 1, and a worship service and workshop at the Eugene UU Church on October 2.

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Took *Spiritual Care with Suicidal Persons* online seminar offered by the Wayne Oates Institute July 11-29, 2011. Course materials included an excellent book on how ministers can work with suicidal parishioners: *Suicide: Pastoral Responses* by Loren L. Townsend.
- Participated in SAMHSA teleconference on *Joining Together on Wellness and Recovery* on July 28, 2011. Presenters included the founder of WRAP, Mary Ellen Copeland. This was a kick-off on National Wellness Week, Sept 9-25, as part of the SAMHSA 10 x 10 Wellness Campaign.
- Participated in SAMHSA teleconference on *Peer Respite Services – Transforming Crisis to Wellness* on August 4, 2011. Learned about the research that shows that peer respite services can have positive impacts for people in recovery during times of emotional crisis. Fascinating!
- Participated in a webinar "Integrated Treatment: A Recipe for Success" on August 25, 2011. This webinar was about co-occurring disorders, led by a woman from La Paloma Treatment Center, and discussed what works in treating mental health and addiction in an integrated way. A very good summary of the issues and what makes for success.

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

- Prepared training materials on "Heart Attacks" for Pastoral Associates at their monthly meeting.

- Helped out visiting people in nursing homes and hospitals as part of the PA program.
- Visited Irene Tejada in the hospital several times.

Mental Health Committee

- Had a successful mental health committee meeting planning out the activities for the church year. We will have something of importance every month from October to June.

Spiritual Direction

- Listed myself on Starr King School for the Ministry, Pacific School of Religion, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, and Center for Integral Studies spiritual director referral list. No customers yet.

Priestly

- Worship leader on August 21 at MPUUC on the subject of “Mysticism” Very good feedback from attendees.
- Led a memorial service for Barbara Pendergrass on July 16.

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- *Mental Health Matters* Public Access TV Show
 - Taped shows on “*Crazy Like Us*” and “Psychiatric Service Dogs” in July, “International Consumer Groups” in September.
 - Shows continue to be broadcast in most of Alameda County on Comcast TV as well as being available from anywhere on the internet. However, the Livermore/Pleasanton station no longer broadcasts public access shows. Hope this isn’t a trend.
 - With P.E.E.R.S. completed an effort with a media consultant to make the show more professional with the aim of making the show gain a wider audience. Many excellent suggestions came from this including: move to a new production studio, improve interviewing style, and incorporate more background footage.
- Mental Health pages on MPUUC web site continue to be widely accessed.
- Interviewed by Don Skinner editor of the UU *Interconnections* newsletter for an article about mental health ministries. It should come out sometime in October.

UUA Accessibility Group

- Continued to maintain the website for the new UU accessibility group *Equal Access*. Take a look at www.equalaccess.org
- As Chair of the Policies committee for Equal Access, directed the creation of an Accessibility Guide for UU Churches and denomination. Document approved and out for distribution. Plan to talk to UU administration for its adoption by the UUA.
- Began working with UU Ministerial Fellowship Committee to get mental health information as part of the required reading list for ministers.
- Instituted monthly conference calls with the Mental Health Caucus leaders. One leader resigned and I recruited a replacement.

UUA Addictions Ministry

- As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, made improvements to their website, including a map of congregations with addictions ministries: www.uuaddictionsministry.org.

Other

Books Read

- *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum, Ballantine Books, 2003. Robert Fulghum's classic collection of stories that are at once real, entertaining, and profound. I particularly like the way he can find a deeper meaning to the ordinary happenings of life.
- *Suicide: Pastoral Responses* by Loren L. Townsend, Abigdon Press, 2006. Excellent resource for pastors who work with people who are suicidal. Particularly good in telling how presence is critically important, and on how to determine how dangerous a particular situation is.
- *A First-Rate Madness: Uncovering the Links Between Leadership and Mental Illness*, by Nassir Ghaemi, Penguin Press, 2011. Ghaemi, a psychiatrist, argues that leaders who have depression and bipolar disorder make better leaders in times of crisis than leaders who are mentally healthy because they are more creative, realistic, empathetic and resilient. His examples include: Churchill, Lincoln, Gandhi, ML King Jr., Kennedy, Sherman, and FDR.
- *Clergy Killers – Guidance for Pastors and Congregations Under Attack*, by G. Lloyd Rediger, Logos Productions, Inc, 1997. Widely read book about people who attack ministers with mal intent, and how to deal with this situation. I had some problem with his assertion that some forms of mental illness are evil, and exorcism is needed to remove evil from the church. He does admit that this doesn't apply to all mental illnesses.
- *Never Call them Jerks - Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior*, by Arthur Paulo Boers, Alban Institute, 1999. What difficult behavior is and how to respond in a healthy way, and with a holistic perspective. A helpful resource.
- *Well-Intentioned Dragons – Ministering to Problem People in the Church*, by Marshall Shelley, Bethany House Publishers, 1985. Some good examples and advice about how to handle people with problematic behavior in the church. Examples are Christian-centric and may not fit UU values, but there are gems of truth to be gleaned.
- *People of the Lie – The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, by M. Scott Peck, Simon and Schuster, 1983. A very original look at evil, which is defined as a new type of personality disorder, similar to narcissism, characterized by: inability to empathize with others, ego-centeredness, scapegoating, intolerance of criticism, over concern with public image, and intellectual deviousness. He speaks of how evil can possess someone and be exorcised. Not sure I buy all of this.
- *Behavioral Covenants in Congregation – A Handbook for Honoring Differences*, by Gilbert R. Rendle, Alban Institute, 1999. The importance of behavioral covenants, and a handbook for creating them. Very Practical.
- *Moonwalking with Einstein – The Art and Science of Remembering Everything*, by Joshua Foer, Penguin Press, 2011. A reporter starts by writing about people who can remember prodigious amounts of information, and takes up the practice himself, becoming the U.S. Memory Champion. Then, he forgets where he parked his car. Very interesting description of the techniques used.
- *Destiny of the Republic – A Tale of Madness, Medicine, and the Murder of a President*, by Candice Millard, Doubleday, 2011. The beautifully written, fascinating story of the assassination by a delusional man of President James A. Garfield which convincingly argues that he was killed more by what his doctors did than the bullet itself.
- *Conflict Management in Congregations*, David B. Lott, Editor, Alban Institute, 2001. This is a set of essays by Alban Institute consultants discussing various aspects of conflict management. Most interesting to me were essays about how different cultures handle conflict.

Personal

- Need to continually work at life balance and stress management. But, this has gotten easier since Nathaniel.
- Weaving *The Wisdom of the World's Religions* accepted into an Interfaith Art Exhibit at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California.
- Joined Fremont organization *Interfaith Women for Peace*. Helping to design a logo for them.
- Ran in Hers Breast Cancer 5K race on Sept 24. Didn't win, but it was good motivation to exercise.

Other

- Joined a community ministry cluster group, made up of community ministers in the Bay Area who have unconventional cross-congregational ministries.
- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee every quarter
- Attended some MPUUC Board meetings.

2011 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 2011	Took SKSM class on mental health and oppression
Attend GA	GA in June	June 2011	Event attended	Done
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 1:	Attended by Dec. 2011	Attended NAMI Calif convention
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Continue producing TV program	Work on developing education using DVDs	Work with PEERS to identify possible users of programs	Ongoing	9 of 12 shows taped this year so far
Continue working on preaching style	Work with preaching professor and drama coach	As speaking engagements show up	Style continues to improve.	Got positive feedback on last sermon – They said I had passion!
Establish Spiritual Direction practice	Announce the beginning of my spiritual direction practice.	On-going	On-going	Brochures. Worship Service. Joined UUA SD network
Long term possibilities				
Explore and enhance my creativity	Center for Creative Exploration The Painting Studio 300 Chenery Street, SF 415.333.9515			
Explore getting a Doctor of Ministry	Evaluate program at Pacific School for Religion	December 2011	Evaluate program by Dec 2011	Decided not to do until / if I have enough time to devote to it.