

Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

March 2019

Executive Summary

- **"Listening Post"** - Continued a Listening Post on Thursday afternoons in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, sponsored by the Faithful Fools Street Ministry. Taking a 2-month leave of absence from the Tenderloin during construction. Now having Listening Posts in two locations in Fremont. Will start listening at homeless shower/laundry facilities sometime in April.
- **Book** – Skinner House Books editor suggested major changes to the book which I made. They will have it reviewed by a couple of people before going into production.
- **UU Mental Health Network** – Have agreed on covenant and mission statement and by-laws. Created website www.uumentalhealth.org Will be submitting paperwork to the UUA. Now 14 people are working on this.
- **Planning speaking event** with Susan Bartlett Foote at MPUUC on May 11. She wrote an excellent book on mental health activism by Unitarians in the 1940's – 1950's. (see book review below)
- Continue work quarter time as **Assistant Director of Life Reaching Across to Life**
- **MPUUC Definition of Community Ministry** – Approved by the Board, along with the affiliation agreement for Barbara Meyers community ministry. Need to create 3-way covenant.

Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details

Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars Taken and Planned

- Began taking the course: *Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills, Chain and Validation*, an on-line course designed by Dr. Marsha Lenahan, the developer of DBT. Offered free by the consumer empowerment department at Alameda County Behavioral Health. To be completed by August 2019.
- Took the on-line course "*Psychosis – What is it?*" offered by the Integrative Mental Health for You organization led by Dr. Emma Bragdon. Helpful framing of understanding psychosis and what kinds of holistic approaches are helpful. March 28, 2019.
- Attended Webinar *Peer-Run Respite Homes: Tips for Rural Areas*, Presented by: Todd Noack. January 29, 2019. Presented by Doors to Well-being. Very good presentation about peer-run respites. www.lifeconnectionsrecovery.org is their website.
- Attended training *Check Your Privilege – Unpacking White Saviorism* facilitated by Myisha Hill, Feb 23, 2019. Got some very good feedback about my involvement with Sidewalk Talk.
- Attended webinar: UUMA Peer Mentoring Check Point meeting, Feb 26, 2019. Good focus on giving feedback that isn't evaluative, and providing guidance.
- Attended webinar: *Peer Specialists as Supervisors*, presented by Tim Saubers, Feb 26, 2019. Presented by Doors to Well-being. Common sense advice for people supervising peers.
- Attended webinar: *Benefits of Recovery Environments*, presented by Ahmad Abojaradeh from Life in My Days, Inc. March 26, 2019. Presented by Doors to Well-being. The kinds of things that are necessary in the environment to enhance recovery from mental health problems: hope, self-direction, responsibility, respect, peer support, holistic, empowerment. Good summary.

Healing

Spiritual Direction

Continuing my work at the corner of Hyde and Turk each Thursday afternoon. Now listening in Fremont at Tri-City Volunteers and the Library. Will start at the homeless shower program when it begins. Current start date estimate is sometime in in April.

Emotional CPR

Nothing this quarter

UU Mental Health Blog morphs into UU Mental Health Network

Continue the UU mental health blog with one blog post per month inviting others to contribute blog contents. With a group of like-minded UUs, created a website www.uumentalhealth.org. Will submit paperwork to the UUA to become an official “related organization.” Crafted by-laws with the group. There are now 14 members in the group.

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. Poor attendance in recent months.

Pastoral Associates

Nothing this quarter. Plan to start it again with the interim minister.

Priestly

- Led worship on February 3 at MPUUC. Subject: Community Ministry.
- Worship Associate on February 24 at MPUUC Subject: Spiritual care of the caregiver

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- Mental Health pages on MPUUC web site continue to be widely accessed.

UUMA Ableism Task Force

With the UUA, helped to offer a webinar on Ableism. Rev. Helen McFadyen and a guest speaker gave the webinar. Well received.

UUA Accessibility Group

- The congregational disability accessibility certification program called the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) program continues its general availability. Five congregations have officially completed the program and about 10 more are in process. I am in charge of implementing this program.
- Working to get an intern who I will supervise.

UUA Addictions Ministry

As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, helped run their web site www.uuaddictionsministry.org.

Other

Books Read

- *The Crusade for Forgotten Souls – Reforming Minnesota’s Mental Institutions 1946-1954*, by Susan Bartlett Foote, University of Minnesota Press, 2018. Fabulous story of how Unitarians in Minnesota

helped to reform mental institutions, and how many reforms were later overturned by tightfisted conservative politicians and bureaucrats. But many important lessons emerged: it gave voice to the voiceless; it helped define a modern mental health system to deliver care; it showed what principled advocates could accomplish. Important considerations for success: effective political leadership is essential; realize that the policy process is fickle; trusted voices of citizen advocates are important; the press can play an important and constructive role in shaping public discourse. Contacted the author and talk about the importance of this book to our future. “The protection of the patient depends on our eternal vigilance.” Author will come to MPUUC on May 11. **Highly Recommended**

- *Digging Out – Helping Your Loved One Manage Clutter, Hoarding and Compulsive Acquiring*, by Michael Tompkins, Ph.D. and Tamara L. Hartl, Ph.D., New Harbinger Publications, 2009. Excellent reference work for loved ones of hoarders. Advocates a family-centered approach, building a plan that the hoarder helps to create.
- *The Collected Schizophrenias – Essays*, by Esmé Weijun Wang, Gray Wolf Press, 2019. Excellent essays on what it feels like to be psychotic. **Recommended.**
- *A Tough Grace – Mental Illness as a Spiritual Path*, by Alice A. Holstein, Ed.D, Chipmunka Publishing, 2011. Excellent story of a woman living with bipolar disorder and how she finally finds her way to recovery. The lessons she learns are important and similar to my own views. **Recommended.**
- *Madness to Ministry – A Woman’s Journey from Psych Unit to Pulpit*, by Nancy Bauer-King Orange Hat Publishing, 2017. This woman’s story had some striking parallels to my story – having a religious conversion experience, believing she was dead, eventual recovery and change in her career. I plan to write to her.
- *Calm and Confident – 7 Spiritual Keys to Overcoming Anxiety*, by Rev. Connie L. Habash, 2019. The real deal explaining how to use spiritual tools to overcome anxiety: presence, embodiment, self-compassion, feeling and listening to anxiety, empowerment and surrender.
- *Madness – American Protestant Responses to Mental Illness*, by Heather H. Vacek, Baylor University Press, 2015. Vacek profiles the lives of 5 key people involved in religion and mental illness throughout American History: Cotton Mather, Benjamin Rush, Dorothea Dix, Anton Boisen and Karl Menninger.
- *Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? – And Other Conversations About Race*, by Beverly Daniel Tatum, Basic Books 2017. Excellent explanation of the socialization process for adolescent blacks, as well as other situations having to do with race. **Recommended.**
- *White Like Her – My Family’s Story of Race and Racial Passing*, by Gail Lukasik, Ph.D., Skyhorse Publishing, 2017. Fascinating true story of a woman who discovers her mother has African-American ancestry and has been passing for white, leaving her birth family behind. Lots of genealogical research.
- *The Path – What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life*, by Michael Puett and Christine Gross-Loh, Simon and Schuster, 2016. Bestselling, readable explanation of Chinese philosophy and how it may relate to our lives. Originally from a popular Harvard course.
- *High Achiever: The Shocking True Story of One Addict’s Double Life*, by Tiffany Jenkins. Self-published, 2017. How a woman puts her life together after being arrested as an addict.
- *Grace in a Wintry Season, Revised Edition*, by Edwin Steinmann, JD. Florence Fleming, LLC Publishers, 2017. Remarkable story of a man’s finding a spiritual home in a journey through his dreams. This is the real deal. **Recommended for seekers.**
- *Bad Blood – Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou, Knopf, 2018. Hard to put down story of Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos which was purported to be a revolution in blood analysis but was a fraud. A feminist anti-hero, Holmes tricked many very powerful people into investing.
- *Educated – A Memoir*, by Tara Westover, Random House, 2018. Westover’s survivalist parents didn’t believe in schools, living in a remote area in Idaho. At 17 she leaves her family and eventually goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University.
- *Booked to Die*, by John Dunning, Simon and Schuster, 1992. Good escapist mystery with a theme linked to rare book stores.
- *True Story: Murder, Memoir, Mea Culpa*, by Michael Finkel, Harper Collins 2005. True story of a disgraced NY Times writer who tells the story of a man who murdered his family. Engrossing.

- *In Plain Sight – The Kaufman County Prosecutor Murders*, by Kathryn Casey, William Morrow, 2018. Well researched true story of an attorney who murders two prosecutors who he holds responsible for unfairly prosecuting him.
- *Los Alamos – A Novel*, by Joseph Kanon, Bantam Books, 1997. Mystery set in Los Alamos at the time of the development of the atomic bomb. Real and fictional characters intertwined. Well written.

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 24-Hour Fitness 2 times a week.
- Got 2.5 months of physical therapy for a pain in my left hip. It is mostly gone now. Exercises and shoe inserts did the trick.

Other

- Met with Community Ministry Advisory Committee regularly
- Monthly status meetings with EqUual Access
- Visit my spiritual director and my psychiatrist regularly.

2019 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 2019	Taking DBT class. Took psychosis class.
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June in Spokane	June 2019	Event attended	GA plans in place.
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31	Attended by Dec. 2018	TBD
Mental Health Ministry	Discern next actions in support of mental health	Chosen by March 31	Activity underway by Dec 2019	Working on UU Mental Health Network
Racial Justice	Discern actions in support of racial justice	Chosen by June 30	Activity underway by Dec 2019	Took class on white fragility
Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs:				
Disability Credentialing Program	Lead the group which will administer the AIM certification program for UUA congregations.	On-going	New congregations sign up for the program	On-going. Plan to get an intern who I will supervise.
Spiritual Direction	Create opportunities for Spiritual Direction practice	On-going		Sidewalk Talk activities are a form of spiritual direction
Long term possibilities				
Mini Sabbatical	Plan to do a weaving tour in Laos and Viet Nam	October 2019 for 3 weeks		Getting shots for trip.