

Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

September 2021

Executive Summary

- **Awarded 2021 Mental Health Champion award by Pathways to Promise in recognition of my service to others.**
- **Book** – Have spoken or preached to the PCD UUMA chapter about my book.
- **UU Mental Health Network** – Adopted new management model involving Board, Ministry, and Support teams. About to start newsletter to invite folks to start ministry activities.
- **Continue work quarter time as Assistant Director of Life Reaching Across to Life.** During the pandemic, we have been doing peer counseling by phone to our regular attendees, putting on Zoom meetings on various subjects.
- **Participating in EqUual Access Re-imagination Process** – Encouraging meetings with UUA management about getting more focus on disability within the denomination – staff, funding, included as a UUA justice issue.
- **Anti-Racism:** Member of ARO team; Engaging in racial literacy reading and study, with now 81books read.



Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details Education

Classes, Conferences and Seminars

- Gave a presentation at the Alternatives Conference focused on my book Held. 7/15/2021. It was well received.
- Attended classes / conventions / conferences
- Attended “*Supporting Altered States*” workshop by Andrew Pegram, July 9, 2021. Discussed beliefs – where they come from. What happens if they are repressed? What are elements of non-ordinary experiences (a belief in interconnectedness, full immersion in the thoughts)? How to listen to others.
- Attended 5-session class on “Defusing Hatred, Everyday Peacemaking, and Courageous Conversations Programs” sponsored by Tri City Interfaith Council and Tri Valley Interfaith Council. Lots of good information combining NVC and other techniques. Weekly starting 7/21/2021.
- Attended 2021 Multi-County Suicide Prevention Summit, September 30, 2021. Excellent day of presentations about suicide and how you can work with folks with suicidal thinking.

Anti-racism trainings

- None this quarter

Webinars on Peer Specialists / mental health

- Attended webinar *Hearing Voices: The Value of Experts-by-Experience*, sponsored by Mad in America, led by Dmitriy Gutkovich, July 22, 2021. Excellent presentation talking about the role for lived experience in the national conversation about hearing voices. Normalizing this experience.
- Attended the event '*Enhancing Quality of Care with Psychiatric Advanced Directive (PAD) and Peer Support*' from the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network, on July 21, 2021. Good discussion of the elements of a Psychiatric Advanced Directive.
- Attended presentation *Gambling: What's the Big Deal?* An excellent overview of the scope of problem gambling, warning signs, and risk factors as well as a discussion of a public health approach to

mitigate gambling related harms, presentation by Lori Ruggle PhD, ICGC-II/BACC, September 19, 2021.

Healing

Spiritual Direction

Have two clients who I meet with monthly online. Started Spiritual Director Supervision with Rev. Amy Beltaine. Joined covenanted monthly meetings with UU Spiritual Directors for mutual support. Putting restart of Sidewalk Talk on hiatus due to the pandemic.

Emotional CPR

eCPR book editing by a professional developmental editor is in process. Will need to do more rewriting after this is complete.

Reaching Across

New manager of Reaching Across is in place. Continued compensated job for quarter-time work. During the pandemic, we are doing peer counseling by phone and having Zoom meetings. Plan to start in person meetings in August.

Pastoral Associates

Rev. Greg and I co-lead a team of seven. Handled Pastoral Support when Greg was on summer leave.

Priestly

- Worship leader at First UU of Berkeley, August, 2021. Subject: HELD

Social Justice

Community Awareness

- Part of the ARO Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression social justice group at MPUUC. Made decision to focus on the 8th Principle this year, with a congregational vote in 2022.

UUA Accessibility Group

- Our EqUUal Access team met with UUA management about getting more focus on disability as a justice issue, and with compensated staff focusing on disability. Encouraging progress on this.
- The congregational disability accessibility certification program called the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) program is on a pause while we redesign the program to get more congregational involvement.
- Monthly status meetings with EqUUal Access and with AIM.

UUA Addictions Ministry

As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, kept the website up and responded to or referred questions.

Self-Care

- Visit my spiritual director and my psychiatrist regularly.
- Keeping up my exercise by walking 4-5 miles a day. Longer runs once a week.
- Attended 5-day Spirit Rest silent retreat in Palos Verdes August 8-13. Surprisingly, I found it difficult because I couldn't hear the instruction. They tried to adjust but it was an unpleasant experience for me. Offered to help them make the retreat accessible.

Other

Books Read (* = audio book I listened to while walking)

Mental Health Books

- Hanson, Rick, Ph.D. *Hardwiring Happiness – The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm and Confidence*, Harmony Books, 2013. Hanson describes how to counterbalance your brain's negativity bias and learn to hardwire happiness. A lot of good ideas and examples of what you can do to change your brain so that it isn't stuck in unhappy thinking.
- Norris, Rev. Katie. *The End of Bipolar – How I Overcame Bipolar Disorder without Medication*, short self-published e-book, 2021. Rev. Katie Norris, a UU ministerial colleague and friend, tells of how she was able with the use of dietary modification to end a life-long battle with bipolar disorder and other mental disorders. And she acknowledges that this is what worked for her, and might not be the answer for everyone.
- Crowe, Kelsey and McDowell, Emily. *There Is No Good Card for This: What To Say and Do When Life Is Scary, Awful, and Unfair to People You Love*, HarperOne, 2017. This is an excellent guide about what and what not to say and do to be empathetic in many kinds of uncomfortable situations. Recommended.
- Moore, Kate. *The Woman They Could Not Silence: One Woman, Her Incredible Fight for Freedom, and the Men Who Tried to Make Her Disappear*, Sourcebooks, 2021. Incredible story of Elizabeth Packard whose preacher husband had her committed to an insane asylum in 1860 because they disagreed about religion. The law of the time permitted this purely on the husband's request. When she was released in three years, she led a fight to get the law changed, and proceeded to be a mental health advocate. **Recommended.**
- Rodrigues, Lucy R. *Rebirth of a Lotus – Escaping Domestic Abuse*, Moon Valley Publishing, 2020. Memoir of a Fremont woman who turned her life around by going with her young child to S.A.V.E. after her husband abused her.

Anti-Racism Books

- Branch, Taylor. *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years 1963-65*, Simon & Schuster, 1998. The well-researched story of the civil rights struggle including freedom rides, Congressional battles, the March on Washington, the Birmingham bombing, assassinations of Kennedy, Evers and Malcolm X, MLK's Nobel Peace Prize. **Recommended.***
- Branch, Taylor. *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965-1968*, Simon & Schuster, 2007. The final volume in this award winning account of the Civil Rights movement. Discusses the poor people's march, the sanitation worker's strike, and the beginning of the Viet Nam War. It ends in King's assassination. Extremely well researched. **Recommended.***
- Nyamayaro, Elizabeth. *I Am A Girl from Africa*, Scribner, 2021. A young impoverished girl from Africa has her life saved by a woman from the UN, and decides that she wants to do that when she grows up. And after much hardship and persistence, she succeeds.
- Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns*, Vintage, 2010. Brilliant history of the 'great migration' of blacks from the South to the North in the United States. Follows three families in detail, with lots of side stories and historical narrative. **Highly Recommended.***
- Hahn, Steven. *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*, Harvard University Press, 2003. Examination of the way that African Americans tried to express themselves politically before the Civil War, during the war and the reconstruction that followed. Disheartening to learn of guerilla tactics by whites intent on keeping blacks from having anything to do with political engagement. The struggle continues today. *
- Garrow, David J. *Bearing the Cross – Martin Luther King, Junior and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*, William Morrow & Co, 1986. Prize-winning biography of MLK Jr gives a close look at his life and the struggles of the Civil Rights movement. The clarity of his calling and his willingness to give his life to it, his personal moral failures, the exhaustion he frequently felt, his personal depressions, and the strains on his family are well documented. It is remarkable that he had such clarity of thought and vision and could speak with such passion under these circumstances. **Recommended.***
- Joseph, Peniel E. *Stokely: A Life*, Civitas Books, 2014. Biography of the charismatic, brilliant firebrand leader of the Black Power movement in the 1960s, Stokely Carmichael. Lots of details of his

various exploits: his leadership of SNCC, his interactions with other civil rights leaders, his emigration to Africa and change of his name to Kwame Ture, and his death from cancer at age 57. *

- McWhorter, Diane, *Carry Me Home – Birmingham, Alabama – The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution*, Simon and Schuster, 2001. McWhorter, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, tells the story of the Civil Rights movement in Birmingham, focusing on Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth and his relationship to other civil rights leaders. There is a detailed account of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, and the many years it took to achieve justice in that case. McWhorter received the Pulitzer Prize for this book. **Recommended.***
- Bloom, Joshua and Martin, Waldo. *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party*, University of California Press, 2013. The formation and history of the Black Panther Party, how it became popular in the time of the Viet Nam War, had many helpful community programs, advocated for armed self-defense against the police, and had a reputation for violence. And how it disintegrated after the end of the war and improvement to lives of Blacks.*
- Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment, 2nd Edition*, Routledge, 1999. Passionate, well-reasoned statement of the situation of black women, in particular the intersectionality of being both African American and being female. Themes include work, mummies, matriarchs, sexuality, motherhood, activism and epistemology for black women. *
- Camp, Stephanie M.H. *Closer to Freedom - Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South*, North Carolina University Press, 2005. Well researched book that gives details of the lives of slave women and men during slavery and at emancipation. How they resisted in small and large ways, ran away, participated in celebrations licit and illicit, and tried to keep their families together. A real testament to the resilience of spirit under the harshest conditions. *
- Smith, Clint. *How the Word Is Passed – A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*, Little, Brown and Company, 2021. A tour of sites once important in the history of slavery but now not largely known – New Orleans, Monticello, Blandford Cemetery, Galveston, Angola, Whitney Plantation, New York City and a visit to Goreé Island in Senegal. An attempt to set history straight.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880*, originally published in 1935, publication by Free Press with an introduction by David Levering Lewis in 1999. Masterpiece that has been called "the foundational text of revisionist African American historiography." Details from many original sources that show the different factions that played out during Reconstruction. The impressive gains of blacks in voting, employment, and schooling, and the backlash from whites resulting in the disenfranchisement of blacks, destruction of their schools, keeping them as agricultural workers or in prison gangs, and the institutionalization of segregation. Particularly disturbing are the guerilla tactics of hate groups to deny blacks political rights, some of which still happens today. *
- Baraka, Amiri (LeRoi Jones). *Blues People – Negro Music in White America*, Morrow, 1963. This is a classic work on the place of jazz and blues in American social, musical, economic, and cultural history. It shows the influence of African Americans on American culture and history.

General Interest Books

- Lackberg, Camilla. *Silver Tears - A Novel*, Knopf, 2021. Mystery follow on to *The Golden Cage*. Fay Adelheim continues her revenge against her ex-husband and her father and battles with people who are trying to undermine her business. Raunchy. There is sure to be a third book after this.
- Trope, Nicole. *The Boy in the Photo*, Bookouture, 2019. Thriller about a mother whose son was kidnapped by her ex-husband, and what happens when her son is found and returned to her.
- Valpy, Fiona. *The Beekeeper's Promise*, Lake Union Publishing, 2018. Story of a young woman in occupied France who keeps bees and aids the French Resistance.
- Styron, William. *Set This House on Fire*, Random House, 1960. A man searches for the reasons behind his old friend's death in Italy. Involves themes murder, rape and suicide. Supposed to be a classic, but I found it slow moving and sordid. Not recommended by me.
- Field, Sally. *In Pieces – A Memoir*, Grand Central Publications, 2018. Honest and revealing memoir by the actress telling of her evolution from TV sitcom to serious actress, her sexual abuse by her step-father, her relationship with her mother, her love affairs, marriages and children.

- Postrel, Virginia I. *The Fabric of Civilization: How Textiles Made the World*, Basic Books, 2020. Fascinating book about the effect that textiles have influenced all aspects of society throughout history, from development of accounting and the number system, slavery and the rise of capitalism, technological advances, political systems, warfare and cultural expression. **Recommended.**

2021 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	Classes completed	
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June on line	June 2021	GA Attended virtually	Attended and part of 2 workshops
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31	Seminar / convention attended	May Peerpocalypse July: Alternatives
Mental Health Ministry	Discern next actions in support of mental health	Chosen by March 31	Determine direction of UU Mental Health Ministry	UU Mental Health Network activities
Racial Justice	Discern actions in support of racial justice	Chosen by March 1	Meaningful actions taking place	Beloved conversations; Racial literacy
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	Program continues to be used by congregations	Revising to get greater use by congregations.
Spiritual Direction	Create opportunities for Spiritual Direction practice	On-going		
Long term possibilities				
Mini Sabbatical	Plan to do a weaving tour in Laos and Viet Nam	Original plan: October 2020. New plan: April 2022		