

# Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2023

## Executive Summary

- **Continue to 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. Will start hybrid program in July.
- **UU Mental Health Network** – Had our first online worship service on May 28, 2023. You can watch a recording it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tX0eXgTGmEo>
- **Anti-Racism:** Continued my education and involvement in the ARO team at MPUUC.
- **Spiritual Emergence Coach.** Completed training to become certified as a spiritual emergence coach.
- **Books**
  - eCPR book to be published through the National Empowerment Center. They are working on the final edits.
  - Working on collecting stories for book on disability co-authored with Shelly Rohe to be published by Skinner House Books.

## Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details

### Education

- Attended an in-person practicum training “How to Effectively Support Someone in Spiritual Emergency” held in Dumas Bay Center, Washington. May 19-21. This training augments webinar training that I had 5 years ago in Supporting Someone in Spiritual Emergency, and it certifies that I am a “Spiritual Emergence Coach”. The training was offered by the Integrative Mental Health University IMHU.
- Took the online course “*Psychosis – What Is It?*” from the IMHU. Psychosis is much more common than generally thought. For some, it may be a spiritual emergency. Being with someone who can provide a calming presence can be very helpful.



### *Attended webinars on Peer Specialists / Mental Health*

- Took webinar *Power, Conflict, Integrity* sponsored by the Doors to Wellbeing, presented by Robert Ortiz. How to claim your power and handle conflict as a peer support specialist. April 25, 2023
- Took webinar *Psychiatric Advance Directives for Youth and Young Adults*, sponsored by the Doors to Wellbeing and presented by Amey Dettmer and Zoia Trexler. Excellent presentation on what PADs are and how they can be formed for youth and young adults. May 17, 2023.

### *Spiritual Director Education*

- Took the excellent 13-session class “*Trauma and Wellness for Spiritual Directors and Companions*” sponsored by Spiritual Directors International. Excellent presentations by experts in trauma and spiritual direction.

## Healing

### *Spiritual Direction*

Have two clients who I meet with monthly online. Continued group 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 Book***

Signed a contract and received an advance from the National Empowerment Center who will be the publisher.

### ***Reaching Across***

Continued compensated job for quarter-time work. During the pandemic, we are doing peer counseling by phone and having Zoom meetings. A number of new groups started. Will start hybrid in person / online program in July

### ***Encouragement Committee***

I participate as a member in this committee.

## **Priestly**

- Worship associate on April 2, 2023 with guest speaker Rev. Sangye Hawk from Livermore
- Worship associate on April 16, 2023 with Rev. Greg Ward on Better Angels of Our Nature
- Worship associate on April 30, 2023 with Rev. Connie Simon on Change on Opening the Door
- Worship associate on May 28, 2023 with Rev. Ruth Reinhart on Hildegard of Bingen
- Worship associate on June 18, 2023 with Sally Fritsch on Our Living Tradition Changing... Again?

## **Social Justice**

### ***Community Awareness***

- Attended Protest at Santa Rita Jail to protest deaths and incarceration of people with mental health issues. April 1, 2023. Covered in the local press.
- At the request of organizers from the Pacifica Institute and Bay Area Cultural Connection, I gave a brief talk about the importance of honoring celebrations of faith at an Iftar dinner, which is dinner breaking the daily Ramadan fast, on April 10, 2023.

### ***UU Mental Health Network***

President of the Board of the UU Mental Health Network. Beginning support groups and a speaker's bureau. Gave a Webinar on Peer Support at General Assembly.

### ***UUA Accessibility Group***

- EqUUal Access has successfully executed an MOU with the UUA. The UUA has hired employees focusing on assume the congregation-based Accessibility work, and some Disability Justice work

### ***UUA Addictions Ministry***

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

## **Self-Care**

- Monthly meetings with my spiritual director.
- Yoga, Beauty Diary, and daily meditation are helpful spiritual practices
- Keeping up my exercise by walking 4-5 miles a day. Longer runs once a week. Had to cut back for a while due to a knee tendon injury

## Other

### *Weaving Completed*

Completed a vest that I called Blueberry Fields. Great to use during worship.



### *Books Read*

#### *Mental Health Books*

- Simpson, Amy. *Troubled Minds – Mental Illness and the Church’s Mission*, InterVarsity Press, 2013. A woman whose father was a minister and her mother had schizophrenia tells the story of her own family and shares what kinds of things congregations can do to help people with mental illness and their families. It has a Christian orientation. **Recommended.**
- Karris, Mark Gregory. *The Diabolical Trinity – Healing Religious Trauma from a Wrathful God, Tormenting Hell and a Sinful Self*, SacraSage Press, 2023. Explores the trauma that is done by a religious belief in Hell, in a punishing God and a belief that all humans are sinners. The author is a therapist specializing in religious trauma. Probably helpful to people who have experienced such religious trauma.
- Quick, Matthew. *We Are the Light*, Avid Reader Press, 2022. Novel about a man who has been seriously traumatized by a mass shooting, and how his helping a troubled teen slowly brings both of their lives back into focus.
- Chodron, Pema. *When Things Fall Apart – Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, Shambhala, 2016. Famous classic explaining the Buddhist philosophy of how to handle difficult situations. OK as far as it goes, but she lost me when she said that one shouldn’t hope. She explained it by saying one should just accept that you are in a trench and not hope to get out of it. Given that all of her lessons were about how much better you would feel if you embraced Buddhist philosophy, I found it disingenuous, and even dangerous for people in suicidal states.

#### *Anti-Racism Books*

- Ng, Celeste. *Our Missing Hearts*, Penguin Press, 2022. A novel about a future time in America when there has been a severe financial crisis and an authoritarian government has taken over, blaming the Chinese for the crisis. Many atrocities occur, including removing children from their parents and hushing it up. A Chinese-American woman poet has unwittingly become the focus of public anger when one of her poems becomes a watchword for protests against the government. She goes underground but her son finds her, learning about her efforts to make the child-napping public knowledge.
- Thurman, Howard. *Meditations of the Heart*, Beacon Press Reissue Edition, 2023. A collection of meditations, poems and prayers from one of the greatest theologians, mystics, preachers and spiritual leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. They were originally written for his congregation but are now treasured by many people of differing faiths. They share a devotion to God and treasure religious community.

#### *General Interest Books*

- Shipstead, Maggie. *Great Circle*, Knopf, 2021. Saved as an infant from a sinking ocean liner in 1914, Marian Graves meets some barnstormers and later becomes a pilot. Her life’s dream is to fly a great circle around the Earth over the North and South Poles. Her story is intertwined with that of a modern-day actress who plays her in a film. A good read.
- Townsend, J.T. *Summer’s Almost Gone – The Haunting Case of the Bricca Family Murders...2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, True Crime Detective Press, 2020. A very thorough examination of the murder of John, Linda and Debbie Bricca in Cincinnati in 1966, which is an unsolved crime. The author speculates on who the guilty person is.

- Child, Lee, editor. *The Best Mystery Stories of the Year 2021*, Mysterious Press, 2021. A collection of entertaining mystery stories by a variety of authors. All are good reads.
- George, Elizabeth. *Something to Hide – A Linley Novel*, Penguin Books, 2022. Mystery focused on the illegal practice of female genital mutilation in England by Nigerian immigrants. Well researched and well written.

## 2023 Development Plan

Area	Plans	Timeline	Measurement	Status
<b>Continuing education:</b>				
Take one or two classes a year	Investigate classes to take in this year	Ongoing- Identify classes	Classes completed	Spiritual direction classes. Webinars
Attend GA in person or virtually	GA in June online	June 2023	GA Attended physically	Attended GA in Pittsburgh
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health convention in next year	Chosen by March 31	Seminar / convention attended	Attended class in May to help people who are in spiritual crisis.
Mental Health Ministry	Discern next actions in support of mental health	Chosen by March 31	Determine direction of UU Mental Health Ministry	Ongoing. Working on support groups and speaker's bureau
Racial Justice	Discern actions in support of racial justice	Chosen by March 1	Meaningful actions taking place	As part of ARO committee.
Spiritual Direction	Create opportunities for Spiritual Direction practice and supervision	On-going		Taking supervision and giving spiritual direction.
<b>Areas for growth in the next 2 yrs.:</b>				
<b>Long term possibilities</b>				
Mini Sabbatical	Plan to do a weaving tour in Laos and Viet Nam	Original plan: October 2020. New plan: Future		TBD