

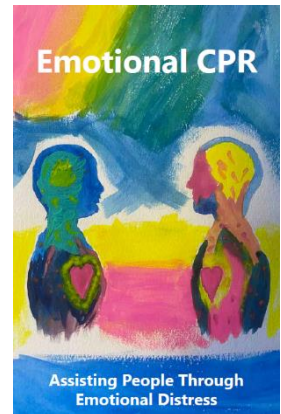
Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2024

Executive Summary

- **Continue to work quarter time as Assistant Director of Life Reaching Across to Life.** We have in-person meetings at Reaching Across 3 days a week, with some of the meetings being hybrid.
- **UU Mental Health Network** – Gave GA workshop on the Children and Youth Resource Toolkit on our website. Writing a prisoner through the writing program run by the Church of the Larger Fellowship.
- **Anti-Racism:** Continued my education and involvement in the ARO team at MPUUC.
- **Books**
 - The book “*Emotional CPR – Assisting People Through Emotional Distress*” of which I am an editor has been published by the National Empowerment Center! Print and pdf copies are available for sale. It is available on Amazon.com.
 - Delivered manuscript to Skinner House Books, July 12, 2023. Book to be edited by a writer hired by Skinner House. New publication target is fall of this year. My personal opinion is that it probably won’t be published until 1Q2025.



Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details

Education

- Took the online course *Spiritist Therapies: Theory and Practice of a Well-Developed Transcultural Paradigm of Mental Healthcare in Brazil* offered by the Integrative Mental Health University. Taught about spiritist therapies involving energy work, mediums, and other spiritual practices that are offered to psychiatric patients along with conventional therapies. Emphasized on holistic health, not just treating disease. About 12 hours of study in May, 2024.
- Attended the webinar *Supporting Extreme States, Dissociation & Experiences Labeled as Psychosis*, offered by Mental Health America, May 4, 2024. People who had lived with dissociation and other psychotic states talked about what was helpful in their recovery.
- Signed up to be a participant in a study by the University of Sydney for people who work with people who hear voices. It will take several months. Looking forward to the learnings.

Healing

Spiritual Direction

Have three clients who I meet with monthly online. Continued group Spiritual Director Supervision with Rev. Amy Beltaine. Restart of Sidewalk Talk is on hiatus for now.

Reaching Across

Continued compensated job for quarter-time work. We have started an in-person and hybrid program.

Encouragement Committee

I participate as a member of this committee.

Committee on Ministry

I was elected to be a member of this committee.

Priestly

- Worship Leader at Sunnyvale May 19.
- Worship Associate April 14
- Worship Associate May 12

Social Justice

UU Mental Health Network

President of the Board of the UU Mental Health Network. Resources on the website greatly improved.

UUA Accessibility Group

Continue as board secretary of the EqUUal Access organization.

UUA Addictions Ministry

As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, kept the website up and responded to our referred questions. Participated in a group discussion led by the UUA to enliven this effort. Helped to choose a person to prepare resources for congregations to use.

Self-Care

- Monthly meetings with my spiritual director.
- 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.
- Continue as a member of a Dementia support group for caregivers
- My latest weaving is on display as part of the Textile Exhibit at Olive Hyde Gallery. Rev. Greg designed it and I wove it.



Books Read

Mental Health Books

- Mantz, Joshua. *The Beauty of a Darker Soul – Overcoming Trauma Through the Power of Human Connection*, Lioncrest Publishing, 2017. Mantz was shot in Iraq and clinically died before being brought back to life. The story of his life from gung-ho infantry leader to PTSD survivor to healer.
- Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi. *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018. This collection of essays is a mapping of access as radical love, a celebration of the work that QD-BIPOC folk are doing to find each other and to build power and community, and a tool kit for everyone who wants to build radically resilient, sustainable communities of liberation where no one is left behind. **Recommended**
- Levine, Stephen. *A Year to Live – How to Live This Year as if it Were Your Last*, Belltower, 1998. How to live each day mindfully, as if it were your last. Gives a year-long program for coming to terms with one's own mortality, learning what is really important in one's life.
- Schulman, Sarah. *Conflict is Not Abuse – Overstating Harm, Community Responsibility and the Duty of Repair*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2016. The theme of this book is that our society has a tendency to avoid conflict and overstate harm, leading to bullying, shunning, and acts of violence both individually and communally. **Recommended.**
- Kriss, Alexander. *Borderline: The Biography of a Personality Disorder*, Beacon Press, 2024. This excellent history of the field of psychiatry from ancient times to now shows how the condition that we know of called Borderline Personality Disorder came to be what psychiatry called hard cases that were difficult to treat. Kriss explains this giving the detailed history of one of his patients who he successfully treated with psychoanalysis. **Recommended**
- Kriss, Alexander. *The Gaming Mind: A New Psychology of Videogames and the Power of Play*, The Experiment, 2020. Bucking a widely held opinion that videogames are bad for mental health, Kriss

makes a convincing argument that they can in fact be a positive influence by engaging the power of play. I will no longer be worried about my grandsons' video gaming. **Recommended**

- Ruck, Sam. *Healing Companions*, self-published pdf. Story by a man whose beloved wife has Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) with 8 different personalities that was created by childhood trauma. He talks about how he walked with his wife through the journey of healing.
- Belser, Julia Watts. *Loving Our Own Bones – Disability Wisdom and the Spiritual Subversiveness of Knowing Ourselves Whole*, Beacon Press, 2023. A fabulous, spiritual, impassioned view of disability wisdom, of seeing God in disability and learning to love the holiness of disabled bodies. Julia Watts Belser went to seminary with me and then attended rabbinical school and became a rabbi. She is a very well-known scholar and professor and the 2024 Ware Lecturer. **Required Reading.**
- Feller, Alice. *American Madness – Fighting for Patients in a Broken Mental Health System*, Roman & Littlefield. Retired Bay Area psychiatrist tells stories about the mental health system and her fights to help patients. Allied with family groups, she believes that more hospital beds are necessary to allow patients time to get stabilized in the hospital before release. A lot of good recommendations to improve things. But, no mention of peer support.

Anti-Racism Books

- Miranda, Deborah A. *Bad Indians, a Tribal Memoir*. Heyday, 2013. Deborah A. Miranda tells stories of her Ohlone Costanoan Esselen family as well as the experience of California Indians as a whole through oral histories, newspaper clippings, anthropological recordings, personal reflections, and poems. It is a work of literary art that is wise, angry, and playful all at once, a compilation that will break your heart and teach you to see the world anew. **Recommended**
- Gordon-Reed, Annette. *On Juneteenth*, Liveright, 2021. The history of Texas, the hardships of African Americans in that history, and family stories form the essays in this historian's-eye-view of her beloved home state.
- Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl - Written by Herself*, Thayer & Eldridge, 1861. This autobiography documents Jacobs's life as a slave and how she gained freedom for herself and for her children. She explores the struggles, harrowing details and sexual abuse that female slaves faced as well as their efforts to practice motherhood and protect their children when their children might be sold away. **Recommended slave narrative.**

General Interest Books

- Eliot, George. *Middlemarch, a Study of Provincial Life*, William Blackwood and Sons, 1871-2. An analysis of the life of an English provincial town during the time of social unrest prior to the Reform Bill of 1832 is told through the lives of Dorothea Brooke and Dr Tertius Lydgate and includes a host of other paradigm characters who illuminate the condition of English life in the mid-nineteenth century. It has been called the best novel in the English language.
- Mead, Rebecca. *My Life in Middlemarch*, Crown Publishers, 2014. Telling her own story of how she read and re-read Middlemarch at different times in her life, Mead shows how a passionate attachment to a great work of literature can shape our lives and help us to read our own histories. Gave me a new appreciation for George Eliot's most important work. **Recommended.**
- Fleeman, Michael. *Stranger in my Bed- The True Story of Marriage, Murder and the Body in the Box*, St. Martin's True Crime, 2003. John Smith killed two of his wives and hid the bodies. Decades later, one of the bodies was found and he was tried and found guilty.
- George, Elizabeth. *With No One as Witness*, Harper, 2012. Lynley, Havers and Nkata are on the path of a serial killer of teen age boys. Lots of twists, turns, characters and heartbreak. Havers saves Lynley's life.
- Phelps, M. William. *Where Monsters Hide – Sex, Murder and Madness in the Midwest*, Kensington Press, 2019. The story of a murder of Chris Regan by the husband of a woman he was having an affair with. The husband is later murdered by his wife and she is convicted of both murders.
- Phelps, M. William. *Death Trap*, Pinnacle, 2013. True story of the murder by Jessica and Jeff McCord of her ex-husband Alan Bates and his new wife after years of custody battles for their two children. The sociopathic behavior of Jessica is horrifying.

- Newell, Debra, and Phelps, M. William. *Surviving Dirty John – My True Story of Love, Lies and Murder*, BenBella Books, 2021. Debra tells the true story of loving and marrying a man, John Meehan who said he was an anesthesiologist, but was a homeless drug addict and psychopath who was a defrocked nurse and ex-con and was after her money. The story is about how he groomed her and isolated her from her family. She eventually realizes her situation and leaves him, which is when the horror starts, culminating in his attempted murder of her daughter, who miraculously fights him off and kills him with the knife he was wielding against her. **Recommended for true crime aficionados**
- Twenge, Jean M., PhD. *Generations: The Real Differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—and What They Mean for America's Future*, Atria Books, 2023. Lots of statistics about the characteristics of different generations and what their beliefs and characteristics are. Maybe a little bit overstated in some cases, but interesting.
- Phelps, M. William. *I'll Be Watching You*, Pinnacle Books, 2008. Serial killer Ned Snelgrove, a Rutgers University grad and top salesman at HP, made a plea bargain for a short sentence for his first murder and attempted murder. Then, when he was released, he killed again. A detailed telling of the story of the tale and the trial.
- Perrin, Kristen. *How To Solve Your Own Murder: A Novel*, Penguin Random House, 2024. A fortune teller tells a young woman that she will die being murdered. She spends her life looking for who might be the culprit. In her will, she specifies that the person who solves her murder will inherit her considerable estate. Her great niece's adventures in solving the murder are the story of the book.
- Copeland, Brian. *Outraged – A Topher Davis Thriller*, Black Odyssey Media, 2024. I liked this first novel by Brian Copeland, someone I know because of his plays in support of mental health and racial issues. I liked this complete change of pace from his previous work - his details about the San Francisco, Oakland and East Bay Area, his sometimes-humorous side comments, and his clever plot. I hope to read more Topher Davis thrillers.
- Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. *A Midwife's Tale – The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*, Vintage, 1991. Pulitzer Prize winning book. An intimate portrait, not only of the industrious and reticent Martha Ballard but of her society of Hallowell, Maine at the turn of the 19th century. It shows a society and a woman's place in it that is very different from ours. It reminds me of stories of my grandmother about a 100 years later.
- Lawhon, Ariel. *The Frozen River*, Doubleday, 2023. A novel based on the life of Martha Ballard of *A Midwife's Tale* (see previous book by Laurel Ulrich). It adds a mystery to the story: finding a murdered body frozen in the ice of the Kennebec River, a murder which Martha is determined to solve.
- Dickens, Charles. *David Copperfield*, Bradbury & Evans, 1850. Story of the life of David Copperfield following him from birth through the maturity of adulthood. Dickens' favorite book, with many memorable characters, he traces David's psychological and physical growth through experiences of becoming orphaned, taken care of by an aunt and a former nurse, schooling, first love and marriage, becoming a widower, and marriage again to the love of his life. Good classic read.

2024-2025 Development Plan

| Area | Plans | Timeline | Measurement | Status |
|---|---|---------------------------|--|---|
| Continuing education: | | | | |
| Take one or two classes a year | Investigate classes to take in this year | Ongoing- Identify classes | Classes completed | Mentor class. Spiritist Therapy class. Webinaar. |
| Attend GA in person or virtually | GA in June online | June 2024 | GA Attended virtually | Attended GA virtually |
| Attend Mental health seminars / conventions | Attend at least one local / state mental health event in next year | | | Not done yet |
| Mental Health Ministry | Discern next actions in support of mental health | Ongoing | 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 | Ongoing | 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. |
| Vacation | | | | |
| Vacation | Attend Convergence weaving convention | July 2024 | | |