

# Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

## September 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** – Getting efforts for communication and support groups started. 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.
- **Self-Care:** Will set aside one day a month to do craft work.
- **Books**
  - Disability book still being developmentally edited by Mary Benard, the head of Skinner House. It probably won't be published until 1Q2025.

### Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details

#### Education

- Was guest speaker at a session organized by the UU Women's Federation. Sept 19, 2024
- Attended virtual conference on Suicide organized by Alameda County Crisis Support Services. Sept 20, 2024.
- Took the webinar *Understanding Resilience in Peer Support* from the National Empowerment Center. July 2, 2024. Talked about and told personal stories of resilience. Introduced to a new app iChill, and a training called the Community Resiliency Model, that contains tools and skills for resiliency.
- Took the webinar: *Peers in the Crisis Care Continuum*, sponsored by California Health and Human Services, July 28, 2024. Speakers talked about peer respite centers for mental health crisis support.
- Took 4-part webinar: *The Poet as Spiritual Companion – Exploring Radiance and Resilience in the Work of Rainer Maria Rilke*, from Spiritual Directors International. Sept 4, 11, 18, 25, 2024. It was taught by Mark Burrows, a poet and translator of Rilke's poetry. The webinar was a wonderful exploration of deeper spiritual meanings in Rilke's poetry.
- Took the course *Meditation Sickness* from the Integrative Mental Health University, Sept 26, 2024. This focused on psychological problems that people experience when practicing various forms of meditation. This was very helpful for myself personally, and people I work with.

#### Healing

##### *Spiritual Direction*

Have three clients who I meet with monthly online. Continued group Spiritual Director Supervision with Rev. Amy Beltaine. Sidewalk Talk in San Francisco will not restart.

##### *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 MPUUC 7 July 2024 – General Assembly Review

## 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 effort to improve worship resources for addictions-related worship services.

## Self-Care

- Monthly meetings with my spiritual director.
- Learned how to make felt hats and got a lot of joy from doing this. Completed weaving for Paul and Knuti from last Black and White Auction. Decided to have one whole day a month to be dedicated to craft work.
- 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



## Books Read

### *Mental Health Books*

- Dusky, Lorraine. *Hole in My Heart – Love and Loss in the Fault Lines of Adoption*, Grand Canyon Press, 2023. The author tells a painful tale from her life. In the 1960s, she has an affair with a married man, becomes pregnant. He won't leave his wife, so she gives her baby daughter up for adoption, starting a chapter of longing for her child, and yearning to be reunited with her. She becomes a leading advocate for opening birth records, and eventually finds her daughter. Both she and her daughter have psychological trauma, leading to her daughter's suicide. Hard to put down.
- Campbell, Bebe Moore. *72 Hour Hold*, Knopf, 2005. A mother tries to find a treatment that works for her daughter who has bipolar disorder and fights the mental health system and also stigma in the African American community. Campbell became a leader in the effort to get mental health treatment for African Americans.
- Korn, Leslie. *Nutrition Essentials for Mental Health – A Complete Guide to the Food-Mood Connection*, W.W. Norton & Company, 2016. Written for clinicians, this is an excellent resource for how food affects mental health. Filled with facts, recommendations and recipes. **Recommended**
- Gillespie, Peggy. *Authentic Selves – Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families*, Skinner House Books 2023. Interviews and pictures of many trans and nonbinary people and their families. The UUA Common Read for 2024-2025.
- Anderson, Lourie Halse. *Speak*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999. A high school girl becomes nearly mute after she is raped. The book follows her first year in high school after a rape, it shows her depression, dwindling school performance, alienation from nearly everyone, until she is finally able to talk about what happened. National Book Award Finalist. A movie was made about the story in the book.
- Boyne, John. *All the Broken Places*, Penguin Books, 2023. A woman whose father was the commandant of a concentration camp in WW II struggles to live with her guilt, keeping her past a secret. A new tenant in her London flat brings her to face her past.

### *Anti-Racism Books*

- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Charles A. Webster, 1885. Huckleberry Finn fakes his own death and sets out on a journey down the Mississippi River with a runaway slave Jim. Widely regarded as Twain's masterpiece. Evocative of the place of blacks in society in the late 1880s.
- Everett, Percival. *James*, Doubleday, 2024. The story of Huckleberry Finn and the slave Jim (who wants to be called James) told from James' point of view. A real masterpiece for modern times. **Recommended.**
- Betancourt, Sofia, editor. *Love at the Center*, Skinner House Books 2024. A set of wonderful essays by UUs about Love and what it means to hold it at the center of your life. **Recommended.**
- Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2007. Story told by 14-year-old Indian boy on a Spokane Indian Reservation who leaves the reservation to go to a white high school. An exploration of identity, both self and tribal. National Book Award winner. **Recommended.**
- Orange, Tommy. *There There*, Knopf, 2018. A novel that explores the plight of urban American Indians, as it also shows the beauty and spirituality of their native culture. It follows twelve Indians who are connected in ways that they don't know as they converge at a powwow at the Oakland Coliseum.
- Ko, Lisa. *The Leavers*, Algonquin Books, 2017. A young US-born Chinese boy is abandoned when his mother vanishes. We later learn she was deported. He is adopted by a white couple who try to make him into their vision of success. Filled with images of poverty in both New York City and in China, the story follows the mother and son's lives. They are reunited in China. It is a story of belonging and self-discovery, and the plight of Asian immigrants in the US.

### General Interest Books

- Zevin, Gabrielle. *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow - a Novel*, Knopf, 2022. The story of two people, Sam and Sadie who meet as teenagers and go on to make very successful video games together. They love each other as close friends and colleagues over a span of 30 years that includes success, failure, heartache, disability and tragedy. Beautifully written. **Recommended.**
- Gunnis, Emily. *The Girl in the Letter*, Headline Review, 2018. A novel about a real situation. A modern reporter stumbles upon a letter written by a girl who was sent in disgrace to an unwed mother's home. She discovers a person connection to the girl, and the harrowing conditions at the home.
- Kingsolver, Barbara. *Demon Copperhead*, Harper, 2022. An update of David Copperfield with the same basic plot and theme – how poor people are badly treated. This time it is in Appalachia with a cast of poor backwoods people. Won the National Book Award.
- Ellis, Joseph H. *American Sphinx – The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, Knopf, 1997. National Book Award. Well-researched portrait of Thomas Jefferson showing what made him tick, his disagreements with other US founders, his vision for America, his idealism.
- Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*, Doubleday, 1900. Story of a young woman's journey from a farm to Chicago and then to New York where she becomes a star actress. The book was very controversial in 1900 because it spoke of her affairs with older men without demeaning her.
- Green, Graham. *Orient Express*, William Heinemann, 1932, Green's first successful novel. Colorful characters, including a businessman, a showgirl, a reporter, a communist revolutionary, a murderer, inhabit a train going from Ostend, Holland to Istanbul. Lots of drama.
- Wingate, Lisa. *Before We Were Yours*, Wingate Media, 2017. Children are taken from their poor parents and adopted to prominent families. Their grandchildren are able to determine the truth. Fiction based on the factual child-stealing-adoption ring of Georgia Tann.

## 2024-2025 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	Mentor class. Spiritist Therapy class. Webinars.
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			Attended Alameda County Suicide Conference
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 education
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.
<b>Vacation</b>				
Vacation	Attend Convergence weaving convention	July 2024		Conference attended. Hats made!