

Quarterly Community Ministry Activities

For the Ministry of Rev. Barbara F. Meyers

June 2025

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. Funding for our organization is guaranteed for at least 2 more years.
- **UU Mental Health Network** – GA workshop on companionship and NAMI FaithNet.
- **Anti-Racism:** Continued my education and involvement in the ARO team at MPUUC.
- **Self-Care:** I am now taking two or three days a month to do craft work. Love it My psychiatrist and spiritual director both think I should work up to one day a week. Started strength training two days a week at CrossFit of Fremont.
- **Book:** Disability book still being worked on at Skinner House Books. I hope it will be published in 2025.

Quarterly Ministerial Status Report Details

Education

- Took the class *Divine Feminine Wisdom: An Introduction* offered by the Chaplaincy Institute. Lectures on June 13-14, lots of readings in books, articles, and chapters plus many required videos all to watch before the class began. Books included:
 - *When God Was a Woman*, Merlin Stone
 - *The Goddesses in Every Woman*, Jean Shinoda Bolen
 - *The Bond Between Women: A Journey to Fierce Compassion*, China Galland
 - *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson*, by Eve PlanteThis class really opened my eyes to the presence of the divine feminine throughout the early history of all civilizations, and its attempted erasure by patriarchal cultures. I will preach on this in the summer.
- Took the online course *God and Mental Health Challenges* by Rev. Hollie Holt-Woehl a Lutheran minister who is on the faculty of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. Interesting to see her bring scripture to the understanding of mental illness, depression and dementia.
- Attended the event “*The Hope of Harm Reduction: Exploring New Dialogue Models Developed by Non-Clinical Support Communities*” presented by Caroline Mazel-Carlton. Sponsored by Mad in America. Excellent description of the Dialog Model, with role plays. The important ingredient for the dialog is establishing authentic connection. You do this by validating their feelings, being curious about their situation, being vulnerable and sharing your experience without making the conversation about you, and creating/offering community. I really liked this event. Sounds like Emotional CPR. April 15, 2025.
- Attended a webinar *Community Driven Approaches: Effective Programming to Support Those Affected by a Death by Suicide*, sponsored by Mental Health America, April 21, 2025. Two men from Broward County Florida spoke about a program called *Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors* (LOSS) teams. This program has national branches throughout the country. The closest one to us is managed in Marin County. Excellent set of resources and what to do / what not to do after a suicide.
- Attended peer specialist webinar from Doors to Wellbeing. *Peer Leadership and Learnership Collaborative: An Equitable Discussion About Leadership* by: Matthew Federici and Jonathan Edwards, PhD. Discussed a methodology of how to align your values to your leadership style. April 29, 2025.

- Attended peer specialist webinar from Doors to Wellbeing. *Reclaiming Employment: Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship for Peers* presented by Laysha Ostrow, PhD. Talked about a research project looking at how best to help peer specialists who want to be entrepreneurs. May 27, 2025
- Attended webinar from Mental Health America. *Reaching Rural: Building Trust and Expanding Access for Mental Health*, June 24, 2025. Lots of good ideas on how to reach underserved rural communities in a way that they can accept and continue the support.
- Attended webinar from Doors to Wellbeing. *What We Know: Crisis, Resistance and Survival* by Nze Okoronta. This is a call to action to affirm our inherent power to survive, support one another, and shape responses to distress that honor dignity, autonomy, and community care.
- Attended webinar from Mental Health America: *Reaching Rural: Building Trust and Expanding Access for Mental Health*. Lots of good discussion on how to serve rural areas. June 24, 2025.
- Attended peer specialist webinar from Doors to Wellbeing: *"We Know What We Need: On Crisis, Resistance & Survival"*, by Nze Okoronta. Explored how peer supporters navigate crisis—individually, interpersonally, and collectively. Reflected on the wisdom born from lived experience, examined the tensions of co-optation and burnout, and reconnect with the radical roots of our movement.

Healing

Spiritual Direction

I have four clients who I meet with online every month. Continued group Spiritual Director Supervision with Rev. Amy Beltaine. I offered to train Faithful Fools to do Sidewalk Talk in San Francisco.

Reaching Across

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

Collegial Support

- On the MFT team for two colleagues working towards full fellowship
- Supervisor for one Community Minister colleague in preliminary fellowship
- Intern committee chair for one colleague's internship

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 Associate for April 27 service on Education
- Led Worship at MPUUC May 25 on Mental Health Ministry
- Worship Associate for June 15 service on Juneteenth – Negro American Spirituals
- Worship Associate for June 29 service on Pride

Social Justice

UU Mental Health Network

President of the Board of the UU Mental Health Network. Resources on the website greatly improved. Workshop at General Assembly

UUA Accessibility Group

Continue as board secretary of the EqUUal Access organization.

UUA Addictions Ministry

As member of the UUA Addictions Ministry, we 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.
- I am taking two -three days per month to do crafts. Psychiatrist challenged me to do one day a week.
- Beauty Diary, and daily meditation are helpful spiritual practices
- Keeping up my exercise by walking 4-5 miles 3 days a week. Longer runs once a week. And strength training two times a week.
- Continue as a member of a Dementia support group for caregivers
- Two of my felted hats in Olive Hyde's Textile Exhibition; Finished Felted Jacket



Books Read

Mental Health and Disability Books

- Taussig, Rebekah. *Sitting Pretty: The View from My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body*, HarperOne, 2020. Memoir of a young woman who uses a wheelchair on her life as a disabled person. It goes through the challenges of her girlhood to college, grad school, job, marriage, and motherhood discussing such taboo subjects as love and sex along with many of the everyday struggles in an inaccessible world. **Recommended**
- Adler, Kevin and Burnes, Donald. *When We Walk By – Forgotten Humanity, Broken Systems, and the Role We Can Each Play in Ending Homelessness in America*, North Atlantic Books, 2023. Excellent summary of homelessness and many possible pieces of a solution.
- Smith, Dandy. *The Wrong Daughter*, Embla Books, 2024. Psychological thriller about a teenager whose abduction is witnessed by her younger sister. When she returns 10 years later, she is different, and the twists in the plot show that her sister lived with Stockholm syndrome, in love with her captor.
- Nguyen, Joseph. *Don't Believe Everything You Think - Why Your Thinking Is The Beginning & End Of Suffering*, Independently published, 2022. Bestselling book that explains that root cause of all psychological and emotional suffering is thinking about and interpreting what is happening, rather than just experiencing it. Very well and convincingly told, with lots of exercises. **Recommended.**
- See Antonia Hylton in Anti-Racism books.
- See Evans, Stephanie, Bell, Kanika, and Burton, Nsenga editors in Anti-Racism books.
- Steele, Tamara and Tracye Burr. *Uncommon Endurance – 12 Women's Stories of Resilience and Redemption*, Elohai International, 2025. Twelve Black women tell their life stories.
- Amen, Daniel G. *The End of Mental Illness: How Neuroscience Is Transforming Psychiatry and Helping Prevent or Reverse Mood and Anxiety Disorders, ADHD, Addictions, PTSD, Psychosis, Personality Disorders, and More*, Tyndale Refresh, 2020. Amen explains how he uses the latest neuroscientific brain scans to understand what is happening in a client's brain, which then makes him able to accurately give effective treatment. Lots of good advice on how to keep your brain healthy. This is the new wave in mental health treatment. **Recommended**

Anti-Racism Books

- Zauner, Michelle. *Crying in H Mart – A Memoir*, Knopf, 2021. Memoir from Indie Rock musician and writer Michelle Zauner, about family, Korean food, grief after her mother's death, love and growing up Korean American.
- Hylton, Antonia. *Madness – Race and Insanity in a Jim Crow Asylum*, Legacy Lit, 2024. The well researched story of the Crownsville asylum first built in the early 1900s to hold insane African Americans that closed in the early 2000s. Stories of individual lives of the patients and staff are given along with archival materials demonstrating how overcrowded and understaffed it was. Beautifully written and heart-breaking. **Recommended**
- Evans, Stephanie, Bell, Kanika, and Burton, Nsenga editors. *Black Women's Mental Health: Balancing Strength and Vulnerability*, State University of New York Press, 2017. This book offers a unique, interdisciplinary, and thoughtful look at the challenges and potency of Black women's struggle for inner peace and mental stability. It brings together contributors from psychology, sociology, law, and medicine, as well as the humanities, to discuss issues ranging from stress, sexual assault, healing, self-care, and contemplative practice to health-policy considerations and parenting. There is a website that gives the many resources quoted in the book: <http://www.bwmentalhealth.net/> **Recommended**.
- Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles*, Adapted for Radio by Rosalind Ayes. Based on an actual murder case reported by Glaspell for the Des Moines News, the play represented an early exploration of gender relationships in a time when women often were considered to be mere trifles. A groundbreaking feminist play.

General Interest Books

- Moore, Liz. *The God of the Woods – A Novel*, Riverhead Books, 2024. A teenager vanishes from a summer camp. The mystery covers many years and generations. You will like this if you like mysteries.
- Michaelis, David. *Eleanor*, Simon & Schuster, 2020. Beautifully written biography of Eleanor Roosevelt. Gets into her life and relationships with FDR, a lesbian lover and a young doctor. **Recommended**.
- Marshall, Megan. *Margaret Fuller – A New American Life*, Mariner Books, 2014. A new Pulitzer Prize winning biography of Margaret Fuller, the woman who was a friend and correspondent with Emerson and Thoreau, and who died in a tragic shipwreck. This is a very thorough recounting of Margaret Fuller's life and the influence that she had on the lives and thinking of many great literary American figures in the mid 1800's.
- McEvoy, Colin and Olanoff, Lynn. *Blood Justice – The True Story of a Doomed Romance, a Singular Obsession, and a Quadruple Murder*, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2014. Story of Michael Ballard, who stabbed his unfaithful lover, her family and a friend to death. It probes his earlier life and his trial.
- Picoult, Jodi and Boylan Jennifer Finney, *Mad Honey*, Ballantine Books, 2022. This is a novel with the story of two teenagers who fall in love. When one of them, a transgender young woman, dies, the other is tried for her murder and acquitted. The story of what really happened is revealed at the end of the book..
- Fuller, Randall. *Bright Circle: Five Remarkable Women in the Age of Transcendentalism*, Oxford University Press, 2025. This book recounts a circle of women- Mary Moody Emerson, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, Lydia Jackson Emerson, and Margaret Fuller- as they developed crucial ideas about the self, nature, and feeling even as they pushed their male counterparts to consider the rights of enslaved people and women. It makes a convincing case that these ideas were first developed by women, who then influenced men such as Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne who have often been thought to have originated these ideas. Beautifully researched and written. **Recommended**.
- Marcus, James. *Glad to the Brink of Fear – A Portrait of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Princeton University Press, 2024. A personal exploration of the complexities of Emerson's life: rebel, lover, friend, husband father, essayist, speaker. It follows his childhood, his education, his actions as part of the Transcendentalist movement, his late-developed abolitionism. It explores ideas in his most famous essays.

- LaPlante, Eve. *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson Who Defied the Puritans*, Harper One, 2005. In 1637, Anne Hutchinson, a forty-six-year-old midwife was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, having been found guilty as charged with heresy and sedition. It was largely because, as a woman, she had her own thoughts and was skillful at teaching them to others. This book by one of her descendants tells her story, and how 350 years later she was pardoned by Governor Michael Dukakis. **Recommended.**
- Cutts, Lisa. *Buried Secrets*, Simon and Schuster, 2017. Police detectives get involved in the death of another police officer and the murder of his wife. Lots of twists and turns in the plot. Keeps your interest.
- Henderson, Tom. *Blood in the Snow – The True Story of a Stay-At-Home Dad, His high-Powered Wife, and the Jealousy That Drove Him To Murder*, St. Martin's True Crime, 2011. True story of Stephan Grant who murdered his wife Tara and dismembered her body. Sickening crime.

2024-2025 Development Plan

Area	Plans	Timeline	Measurement	Status
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 in person	June 2025	GA Attended in person	GA Attended in Baltimore
Attend Mental health seminars / conventions	Attend at least one local / state mental health event in next year	February 2025		Attended Access California Annual 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.
Vacation	Attend Convergence weaving convention	July 2024		Continue to make hats and other felting projects.