



CROSSROADS

NEWS OF UU COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

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Member Spotlight: Together in Spirit The Community Ministry of Kathleen Moloney-Tarr

In the eighth grade we took a vocational assessment to determine jobs we were suited for. My results suggested teacher, sanitary engineer [garbage collector] or clergy person. I followed the first suggestion and became a high school English teacher, an adult educator and leadership consultant. I certainly employed the skills of sanitary engineer as the mother of two active sons, but for decades I remembered the one suggestion I laughed at with my fellow students in middle school. Clergy person seemed so odd to me.

My family was not religious or even spiritual. We did not attend church regularly or study religious teachings. We did have a keen reverence for the natural world, and I remember the times we rescued baby rabbits, watched a monarch caterpillar transform in her golden chrysalis or played under the arboretum's tree canopy. For a brief time when I was in grammar school, we attended a UU church that met in a school. I remember loving the class about King Tut and singing in the children's choir. I remember how kind everyone was to me and that I liked attending. In high school I attended the UU Church of Atlanta when Rev. Gene Pickett was minister and was inspired by his talks. As a beginning teacher, I found the UU Church of Charlotte and have been an active lay leader since the seventies.

It was a surprise to me in 2003 when I began to have stirrings about ministry. I did not know what to do with them. I ordered catalogues from Emory, Duke University and Meadville-Lombard and studied them carefully. I sat with the information in silence and finally discerned that I did not want to be a minister of a church and congregation. My search was solitary for months, but one day I mentioned my quest to a friend who told me about spiritual direction. I was immediately intrigued but could not imagine how anyone would come to me to talk about spiritual formation. I had only questions, no answers!

Within a few months her husband was diagnosed with lung cancer. For a year and a half he and I met often in dialogue about prayer, spiritual questions, fear, God, life and death. Shortly before he died, I committed to learn more about spiritual direction. I created a six-month curriculum for myself with readings and written assignments. And I fell into the study. I could not wait to wake up to read Gerald May or Thomas Merton. I wrote about my path and found a deepening connection to life. I

applied to Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Bethesda, Maryland and spent the next two years working through their Spiritual Guidance Program. I formed a local peer group with other spiritual directors as individuals began to ask me if we could sit together to talk about how Spirit was moving in their lives.



Our times together are blessed and surprising. Recently a directee spoke about being a traveling performance artist on the evangelical circuit in the 1990's. She felt disappointed in herself for not standing up for what she needed as a woman in what was a restrictive work culture. She felt she had not been true to her spirit. When she finished speaking, it came to me to have us remember what it was like to be a working woman in the 1990's. We had to dress like the men—even wear those silly little bow ties at our throats. We had to conform to the established, more male culture for quite a while as women were integrated into the workplace. My words affirmed her strength and success in spite of such a climate. I reminded her that she is perfect and whole just as she is, and perhaps she could find it in her heart to love the woman who struggled and made her living doing the best she could under difficult conditions. When I stopped speaking, I was a little taken aback at all I had said. My mind kicked in, wondering, "Where did all THAT come from?" She was smiling and nodding. Then she told me of a dream she had where Jesus stood beside her and whispered that she is whole and perfect. Then other supportive people from her life stepped forward to whisper their affirmations and praise of her as she seeks her spiritual essence. She said that my words echoed what had happened in her dream. We both shook our heads in wonder at the alignment.

Today I am honored to sit with individuals from a variety of faiths. We hold silence together, pray, share readings, and listen to how the Divine is working in their lives. They share their joys and sorrows on the spiritual path and talk about how they are responding to Spirit's movement in their lives. We are not so much thinking and analyzing as we are allowing and letting ourselves know the presence of God. Our time together always increases my

faith and wonder and brings both of us peace and hope. Decades after that curious vocational test, it delights me to be in this contemplative relationship with others, even though I still have more questions than answers.

Kathleen spent 19 years in public education and 20 years running her consulting firm, Leadership Dynamics. As a spiritual director, she sits with individuals who are interested in exploring their spiritual lives. She writes poetry and personal essays and facilitates workshops such as Writing Your Spiritual Journey, This I Believe and Soul Book. Kathleen lives in Charlotte and Little Switzerland, N.C.



President's Message

By The Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles, UUSCM President

Dear Colleagues,

It's a pleasure to greet you in this New Year, which I think will be a great year for Community Ministers everywhere. Your officers in the Unitarian Universalist Society for Community Ministries have been busy, and we're

continuing to upgrade and enhance what we can do for you.

The most immediate change is the switch to our new web site which went live a couple of weeks ago. Each of you should have received an email from the new site that gave you your log on information and password.

Please take a moment to logon to the new site. Once you log in you will see the *Members Only* section containing sermons, ceremonies and other information helpful to you. You will also see a *Private Member Directory* where you can update your own listing (or edit what is there), change your password and control how information about you can be used.

The new site will automatically send you reminders when your dues are due and you can pay them on line. You can also make donations, communicate with other members and register for events, all from the convenience of your computer. There will be a *Member Forum* that will help create horizontal linkages between members and a *Blog* that will give us a easy way to announce job opportunities, available grants, answer questions about everything from "how to build your ministry" to the latest changes in clergy tax law.

I personally plan to use the *Forum* on the new web site to reach out to the successful, long-term Community Ministers in UUSCM. We've tended to focus our efforts on new colleagues and start-up ministries. Yet we have members who have been prospering in their work for decades. They can provide a treasure-house of wisdom, advice and guidance. I want their voices to be heard in our organization.

Also, we'll be transitioning *Crossroads* into a new format. The change begins with this edition which will only be published by email in PDF format. We have plans to recreate *Crossroads* into a different kind of publication so that it does not overlap with our monthly email newsletter *Beyond the Walls*. We have not finalized the changes yet but I think you will be surprised and excited by what we're considering.

We have instituted a sweeping clarification of our membership categories and titles to respond to concerns many have expressed. My President's Letter in this month's edition of *Beyond the Walls* will be about them, and I think the new titles will make you feel proud and included in our thriving form of ministry.

And we have other announcements that will come soon, and I predict you will like them.

Community Ministry is the future of Unitarian Universalist ministry and we're here to help make that future happen. It's great to have you with us on this journey.

**Best Wishes,
Scot**

UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION & WEB BIO

Please take a moment now to review your membership information and bio on our website, www.uuscm.org. Questions? Contact Administrator Connie, revconnie@comcast.net, 503-385-2135

The Work of the Chaplain **by Naomi K. Paget and Janet R. McCormack** ***Book Review by James L. Cavanaugh, UUSCM Board Member***

I first read this when I found it in my seminary bookstore and hoped it would be useful in the field education project required of me, serving as an intern chaplain at my county prison. It proved far more valuable than I had expected, so much so that I gave it to my supervisor during my first unit of CPE. I am now using my second copy as a reference to work with the senior chaplain at the prison for training other volunteer chaplains, particularly those from an evangelical background.

Paget and McCormack share a wealth of experience in chaplaincy. They are both board certified by the Association of Professional Chaplains, both teach at seminaries, and between them have experience in workplace, parish, military, health-care, community, law enforcement, hospital, police, prison, NASCAR and crisis chaplaincy.

I found this little book to be well organized. After a readable introduction, they offer three major parts:

- Foundations for Chaplaincy, covering the historical, legal and biblical foundations,
- The Work of the Chaplain, including the ministry tasks and competencies for the chaplain, and military, health-care, workplace, correctional and prison, first-responder, and other chaplaincies,

- The Person of the Chaplain, including; Keeping the Chaplain accountable, 'Minefields for the chaplain, and Health and empowerment for the chaplain.

There are three useful appendices: Preparing for the work of the Chaplain, Finding and Keeping a Position as a Chaplain, and Resources for Chaplain Ministry.

The Conclusion includes an excellent quote that rings true with this chaplain:

"Chaplains minister in the tension of seeking to find balance – between serving God, serving people, and serving the institution that employs them; between their accountability to the ecclesiastical body that endorses them and to the institution that retains them; between being a spiritual caregiver and a religious provider; between being inclusive of all faith traditions and not compromising their own beliefs; between providing meaningful spiritual care and knowing when to refer to a specialist. Spiritual maturity, a servant heart, and humility are essential attitudes for the successful chaplain."

The Work of the Chaplain, by Naomi K. Paget and Janet R. McCormack. Judson Press, Valley Forge, 2006.

James L. Cavanaugh has been a volunteer chaplain at Dauphin County Prison, Harrisburg, PA since January, 2005

UUA Continuing Education Grants for Ministers in Fellowship

If you are a fellowshipped minister, you can apply for a continuing education grant (up to \$500) from the UUA, Ministries and Faith Development. Rev. Jory Agate writes, "If you would like to apply for a grant for next fiscal year, you may do so at any time and the earlier you do so, the better your chances of receiving a grant. The CE event you are applying to be funded must take place next fiscal year (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012.) For an application for and to review the criteria used in awarding grants, please go to

our website at:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/ministerialdevelopment/continuingeducation/23119.shtml>

This year they prioritized ministers in preliminary fellowship and ministers who did not receive a grant last year. If you did not receive a grant this year, you will be a higher priority to be awarded a grant next year. It only takes a second to apply!

Take time to WORK it is the price of success, PLAY it is the secret of perpetual youth, THINK it is the source of power, READ it is the fountain of wisdom, PRAY it is conversation with God, LAUGH it is the music of the soul, LISTEN it is the pathway to understanding, DREAM it is hitching your wagon to a star, WORSHIP it is the highway of reverence, LOVE & BE LOVED it is the gift of God.

Membership Moments

By The Rev. Michelle Walsh, Membership Director

Recently I called for all members - lay, seminarians/interns, ordained, or fellowshiped - to chime in on our UUSCM chat list as to what are our training needs as community ministers. Many of you responded in-depth and your responses reminded me once again of how diverse and powerful our respective ministries are and how much we have to contribute to our larger Unitarian Universalist movement in the world. This is striking me at this time particularly because the UUA is in the midst of finalizing a new report entitled "Strategic Review of Professional Ministries: A New Ministry for a New America," recognizing our new and/or growing multicultural reality. When I received a draft copy of the report in our UUMA chapter meeting, I was dismayed to see that community ministries were acknowledged with barely a sentence and that once again an opportunity is being missed to see the enormous contributions we already make and can make further for our association. Not to worry - your UUSCM board is on it and working on recommendations for this draft report!

Chat list responses demonstrated both our unique needs as community ministers and areas in which we also share needs with our parish colleagues. There was an overriding call for more training in how we can articulate and ground our community ministries in our UU theologies - or as your UUSCM Chapter Coordinator Rev. Jeremy Taylor prefers to state it - our "UU foundational beliefs and principles" to recognize that "theology" is often an uncomfortable word for those who are humanist and that we are truly a pluralistic faith. This fostered a deeper conversation about recognizing our history and grounding in liberal religion even while some are also humanist today. Jim Cavanaugh, a lay UUSCM board member, called for the use of Parker and Buehrens' new book *A House for Hope* as a training vehicle for community ministers, while another person volunteered to work with Jeremy on developing his proposal for a training. I would personally add that it is

important that we understand the roots of our tradition in the Radical Protestant Reformation and, myself being a practical theologian by training, that our practices continue to situate us in the Protestant tradition. Words such as "theology" and "religion" will always be problematic because their roots are in a vision of empire struggling to account for different ways of being in the world and thus labeling these other ways of being as "religions" with different "theologies." (Since I practice Buddhism, the word 'theology' is oddly misplaced there, too, yet I study practical theology as an academic and strive to apply it's concepts in 'interreligious' contexts.) I might modify this proposed training to focus on "UU foundational beliefs, practices, and principles." When we examine our actual foundational practices, we need to incorporate an understanding of our history in that process, a history that includes how we have both participated in and challenged the dominant culture.

Calls for other specific trainings and/or information included intensive nonviolent crisis management and de-escalation or conflict mediation (but again, grounded in our theology) and trainings in public health issues such as the spread of STD's, HIV, and Hepatitis; mental health struggles; across the lifespan addiction recovery (substance abuse and behavioral); recovery from trauma (domestic violence, gang violence, combat experience, sexual assault); self injury and suicide prevention; chaplaincy opportunities (community hospital, mental health, prison, military service, business); class, race, gender, and sexual orientation; the plight of refugees and asylum seekers; post colonial practices, here and abroad. It was recognized that many of these trainings would benefit our parish colleagues as well - and I dare say, continue to better prepare us for "A New Ministry for a New America!"

My thanks to all of you who responded on the chat list and I continue to encourage you to do so! Let's continue this discussion and start some new ones!

**Peace and Blessings,
Rev. Michelle Walsh, MSW, LICSW**

Eleven New Members Brings Membership Total to 159

We extend our hearty welcome to our new members

**Rev. Lynn M. Acquafondata, Rev. John E. Burciaga, Rev. Ann S. Fuller, Richard F. Jacke,
Rev. William Neal Kennedy, Rev. Sarah Lammert, Rev. Judith Oliver Long, Rev. Kelly Murphy Mason,
Rev. Renee Zimelis Ruchotzke, Rev. George Whitehouse, Rev. Kate Wilkinson**

Member Milestones

Jim Cavanaugh, Lay Community Minister organized a successful annual interfaith Roe v Wade Celebration on Sunday January 23 at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, PA. It was successful two ways: Speakers in different faith traditions voiced their faith-based support for reproductive justice in general and a woman's moral agency in particular, including UU, UCC, Buddhist, Muslim, and (via written statement from Catholics For Choice) Catholic. And, in the next morning's paper, the front-page article about thousands of Roman Catholics converging on the mall in Washington, DC included a description of the interfaith service, quotes from several of the participants, and a headline that stated "Legal Abortion Polarizes Midstate" followed by "Area Roman Catholics will participate in today's March for Life. A Unitarian church holds a meeting called "Celebrating Roe in a New Century."

The Rev. Peggy Clarke was ordained by the UU Fellowship of Northern Westchester in Mt. Kisco, NY and the UU Fellowship of Briarcliff, Ossining and Croton in Croton-on-Hudson, NY on November 7th.

The Rev. Brian Clougherty reports that In the topsy-turvy world of providing counseling services to Medicaid-funded clients in NC, he is now "Team Lead" with a new company, Family Legacy Mental Health Services, Inc. He is expanding their services into Durham County, NC. He continues to provide Intensive In-Home counseling to children at risk of being removed from the home and their families. Brian has also established a private practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor.

Mark DeCourval is pleased to announce that on January 23, 2011, the congregation of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia unanimously voted to grant him sponsorship as a Unitarian Universalist Ministry Candidate.

Ellen Dionna, LCSW, has developed and is teaching a two-year experiential program, Shaman's Path, which offers participants study in shamanic spiritual practice. This includes introduction to and immersion in shamanic reverence for the cosmos, journeys to the Otherworlds, energy-healing techniques, and ceremonies. We explore traditions in which Ellen has been taught and apprenticed: Native American, including Brazilian and Peruvian shamanism, and Celtic shamanic wisdom. Ellen is a member of the UU Congregation of York, PA.

The Rev. Dr. Dorothy Emerson reports that she is traveling in northern California in February and in southern California in September-October. She is pleased to have been invited to preach in three northern California congregations and to offer a workshop in one. These trips are part of her research for a memoir and social commentary on the 1960s and include offering an opportunity for group conversations on "harvesting the 60s." RevEmerson@aol.com

The Rev. Keith Goheen was certified by The Association of Professional Chaplains as having met the organization's training requirements and standards of practice. As a Board Certified Chaplain (BCC), Keith joins the senior ranks of a nationally recognized leader in the field of spiritual care to persons in medical and judicial institutions. To learn more about the benefits of professional chaplaincy and board certification, visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wup_K2WN0I&feature=channel

The Rev. Debra Haffner is thrilled to report that she will receive an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree from Widener University in May 2011.

The Rev. Cynthia Kane announces the birth of Asher Gerhart Kane on Monday 13 September 2010 @ 12:54am (21 inches, 6 lbs 14.5 oz). Despite a long (72-hour) labor, all went well with baby and mom. He'll be joining her at the UUMA Institute and General Assembly. She was promoted to Lieutenant Commander on Wednesday 5 January 2011. She will remain in her billet serving the Coast Guard in Sector Northern New England (Navy chaplains serve the Coast Guard & Marines as well), probably through the end of this calendar year.

The Rev. Kurt Kuhwald reports that Joanna Macy, internationally recognized lecturer and workshop leader in the deep ecology and transformational work called The Work That Reconnects, has selected him to be one of nine persons responsible for being stewards of that work in the Americas. "I am deeply humbled and honored to engage in this task. It is a task committed to helping people consciously turn away from supporting, and energetically resisting, the Industrial Growth Society that is leading us swiftly into the unraveling of civilization and toward an Earth Sustaining Society that will undoubtedly be far more localized in form."

The Rev. Barbara F. Meyers has been selected to receive a Mental Health Achievement Award from the Mental Health Association of Alameda County, California. The award is to recognize her successful efforts to educate church goers and the community at large about mental illness and the challenges it presents to people directly affected and their families and friends and to eradicate the stigmas surrounding mental illness. She is a UU community minister affiliated with Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Fremont, California. Her ministry focuses on mental health issues.

The Rev. Lee Page reports that at the invitation of new parish minister, the Rev. Scott Alexander, he was offered the position of affiliated community minister with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach. He will be participating in Sunday services, teaching a short program,

co-leading a group, and serving on the lay pastoral committee. In addition, he is organizing a group of volunteer members on a trip to New Orleans to help in the rebuilding of the UU churches there.

The Rev. Dr. Brent A. Smith concluded 27 years of Parish Ministry when he accepted the invitation to join the faculty of Grand Valley State University, a 24,000 student university in

the Michigan system, as a Professor in the Liberal Studies Department. Dr. Smith assumed his duties in August 2010 and in the upcoming years will help to create a Religious Studies major and Religious Studies Department. He is a graduate of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago and Meadville Lombard, and has served Unitarian Universalist congregations in Wisconsin, Oklahoma, and Michigan before his faculty appointment.

Good Offices: My Two Cents

By The Rev. Cathleen Cox, UUSCM Good Officer

The entire labyrinthine morass began when my internet connection died. This led to purchasing a new modem, which led to calls to AT&T, which led to repurchasing another new modem, which led to the young, mostly helpful but also slightly condescending, “Geek Squad” guy installing it, which led to downloading a “clean up” program, which led to my finance program crashing, which led to downloading a new version, which led to my dismay that I could not figure it out, which led to hiring a computer tutor, which led to my wonder and consternation at learning that I could download financial transactions directly from the bank. Who knew? Probably the rest of the Western world. But I was thrilled! What a time saver! Almost made the entire swampy slog worthwhile.

Then the terrible moment of revelation: my incredibly patient tutor and I had reconciled my accounts from the downloaded info – and *the bank had made a two cent error!*

I was upset. I was upset by how upset I was. Really upset. “How can that be possible?” I asked in the disbelieving voice of kindergartener who has just been told there is no Santa Claus. “How can *the bank’s computer have made a mistake?*” She smiled, bemused. “Do you want me to give you two cents to make up for it?” she asked. I didn’t. I didn’t want the two cents. I wanted the bank’s computer not to have been wrong.

What I wanted was to find out, after so much travail, what I could count on. I wanted to find where the Ground of Being, as Tillich called it, lay. And I wanted it to be the bank - or at least the bank’s computer - since we all know, after the last few years, what wild and libertine rapsallions bankers are!

It’s human to want to know what is reliable. I have been particularly struck by how often my colleagues in community ministry express feeling afloat and unmoored, anxious, needing to locate the foundation that can be counted on to sustain us. I think it is a particular challenge for ministry outside parish walls. Is our ground in our places of ministry? Our congregational affiliation? Our denomination? Our professional organizations? All these have a role to play in our lives, but like the bank’s computer, are fallible human institutions.

But how easy it is, with all the swirling demands and changes in our lives, and feeling that longing for reliable ground, to grasp at *something* to depend on. Even a bank’s computer system. So many false idols.

I believe we bring our best, and call forth the best from others, when we ground our selves, once again, in the only thing that can sustain us: our connection to the Sacred/Self, however named, and our open-hearted presence to the ways it is manifesting in our lives now. We all need that. Community Ministers who are serving “beyond the walls” in diverse and demanding contexts, that ask for so much from us, may particularly need to remember to recharge from that centering place within.

So. Back to spiritual practice. Take a moment (or two) to slow down today and just *connect*. Turn to whatever spiritual practices work for you, and connect to the Essence within. Connect to what sustains you when all else falls away. Breathe into it. Rest in it. Open and be carried by it. What will you know you need when you turn there?

I have forgiven the bank. I will use it for whatever services it can offer, which is quite a lot, but I will not expect more than it can provide. Banks may fail. The Source within never will.