



PATHWAYS TO PROMISE

November 2013



Companionship

Craig Rennebohm, Pathways Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Pope Francis invites us to look at congregations as “field hospitals,” front line centers for serving individuals who are wounded and suffering. Our first task is to be open to a relationship, not only at the door, but in our neighborhood. We need not be experts to sense that someone is isolated and struggling, to feel with that person their hurt and confusion, and have concern for their health and well-being.

Gently approaching another, sitting quietly nearby, offering a gentle greeting, inviting a person to share in a moment of simple rest or refreshment, all of these are part of the practice of hospitality, a first step on the way of companionship. Companionship continues with the practice of neighborly – discovering and affirming what we have in common, setting aside what is of privilege and prejudice in us, and honoring the unique gifts and strengths in us each. Companionship proceeds in sharing the journey side by side, looking out at the world together, in a deeply rooted grace, trust and faith. Companionship is deepened by a fourth practice of listening to a person’s story, however it can be told, and patiently, over time, exploring how these immediate moments of painfulness may become part of a larger story of healing and growth. A fifth practice of companionship is accompaniment, supporting a person in taking next steps and building a long term circle of care and support.

The Affordable Care Act holds a vision of a medical home for every individual. We can literally help insure that each person in our community has such a basic place of care. A person’s “medical home,” a clinic, a doctor, nurse or physician’s assistant, is a doorway to readily accessible specialized resources of healing and help, including behavioral health treatment, counseling and case management. Even with the best systems of care and the best of services, few of us who face a severe and persistent mental health issue such as a major depression, bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, PTSD or a substance use disorder, can make it to a medical home, or into treatment without some form of companionship. We all need someone “with us,” not just physically, but spiritually.

The core resources of Pathways to Promise, provide training and education to clergy and lay leaders about mental health ministry and how to organize a congregational mental health team. Our most basic and heart resource introduces ordinary members of a congregation to the practices of companionship.

The “promise,” in and for us all includes the gift of wholeness, a well-being that embraces our frailty, disorders and illness, and nurtures our best and fullest selves. To all who fellowship with us, who come to our doors and whom we meet in the community, we share and affirm a deep human hope, “that all will be well.”

Continued ►

Please note
our new phone
and fax num-
bers below.

Pathways to Promise
5400 Arsenal Street
St. Louis, MO 63139
Pathways@mimh.edu
www.pathways2promise.org
314-516-8489
Fax: 314-516-8405

Companionship from page 1.

The context of health care is undergoing change and challenge, and includes new opportunities for individuals facing mental illness. But the basic role of congregations and people of faith is ageless. We are created sensitive to one another's suffering. We are capable of profound compassion. Concern wells readily within us. This is how we are made – to love and care for one another, to companion each other.

Actively companionship, we can be part of helping connect as many as possible with a medical home, and supporting our sisters and brothers in securing appropriate care. Actively companionship in our congregations and communities we will also know first-hand what is working and where are the barriers and gaps in service. Actively companionship, we can be of front line service, and knowledgeable servants, advocating for an ever more just and effective system of mental health care.

Creating Hope: The Power of Faith Communities in Mental Health Recovery**Chicago – January 15, 2014**

See conference brochure at <http://pathways2promise.org/pdf/power-of-faith-color.pdf>

Dear Faith Group Friend,

On behalf of Pathways to Promise, its member faith traditions, and its supporting organizations, we would like to invite you to help spread the word about the Creating Hope conference to clergy, lay leadership, families and peers in recovery, and mental health professionals. The conference will be hosted by one of our member organizations at Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Chicago (near O'Hare airport).

Surveys of clergy in our area have identified the need for educational events on mental health topics that would assist clergy and those in pastoral care roles, such as parish nurses, Stephen Ministers, chaplains, deacons, companions, befrienders, mentors, and people of faith with an interest in mental health issues. This education event on January 15 will provide such an opportunity.

We will have two keynote speakers, Nanette Larson, Director of Recovery Support Services for the Illinois DHS/ Division of Mental Health, and Rev. Craig Rennebohm, Executive Director, Pathways to Promise, and a number of resource panelists on very practical and useful topics related to mental health efforts in faith communities.

The last major event sponsored by Pathways to Promise, was held in Belleville, IL in 2009, with over 150 faith leaders from around the country attending. Another similar event in 2012, sponsored by our Chicagoland local affiliate, the Interfaith Mental Health Coalition had over 150 people from 72 different local faith communities participate, including 59 clergy, 25 faith leaders, and 34 active lay person volunteers involved in ministries to those with mental illnesses and their families.

Again, we are enthusiastic about this event but most of all we are looking forward to your participation.

For any questions or concerns please contact me or Sular Gordon at 314-8489; sular@Pathways2Promise.org.

Robert Skrocki, LCSW
Board Chair, Pathways to Promise
630-802-0769; bpskrocki@comcast.net

Interview with Kae Eaton, Mental Health Chaplain at the Community Lunch

Sam Rennebohm recently sat down with Kae Eaton in Seattle, Washington to learn more about her work as a Mental Health Chaplain and her use of the Companionship model in assisting people experiencing mental illnesses and related challenges.

The Community Lunch, where Kae provides chaplaincy and companionship, was started 15 years ago to serve regular, free meals. The program serves lunch on Tuesdays and Fridays at Central Lutheran Church, and dinner on Thursday Nights at All Pilgrims Church. Both churches are in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. The meals serve a community that includes people on the street, low-income people, and people connected to various "helping" ministries and programs. It is a "safe zone" in which the police are not allowed while they are on-duty, and there is no checking for drugs or weapons. Because of its location and open-door policy, the program also draws people in the midst of their struggles with addiction and mental illnesses. To maintain a safe environment, de-escalation and peace-keeping strategies are an important part of the program.



Reflecting on the program's wider impact, Kae refers to the provision of meals as "a community creating endeavor." She finds great joy in observing the way the community hospitably engages people who are coming for the meal. People watch out for one another, and for the most part, when trouble arises, people reach out and care for one another. It is a community, with people who have been coming there for a long time. Because of her ongoing involvement with the Community Lunch, Kae often can identify and speak with many people when she drives through Capitol Hill area.

Though volunteers come from all over the Seattle area to cook and serve food, Kae is the person primarily responsible for the companionship portion of the program. Through a partnership between the Mental Health Chaplaincy (Kae's organization of employment) and the Community Lunch, she regularly is present herself when lunches are served. She both provides companionship to people receiving free meals and she helps to train other volunteers on the companionship model, both informally and through formal trainings. The importance of her role was made clear recently when Kae was asked to come to the annual retreat for the Community Lunch board - not to be on the board, but rather, to bring the companionship perspective to the group and help them incorporate it into their strategic plan.

In her own estimation, while companionship is helpful to people who are the recipients of the free meals, there is often an even more significant transformation that takes place among the staff and volunteers.

During her time at the Community Lunch, Kae has noticed a change in the capacity of volunteers, interns, and staff as they spend more time with her and the companionship model. Things "ease up" for them, and learning how to be a companion increases volunteers' confidence and increases their capacity to enjoy their time with people who attend the Community Lunch. The joy she sees on people's faces is significant. She notices that after she has conducted a companionship training, volunteers are able to relax. They stop expecting too much of themselves and of the interactions with people receiving free meals. They are more comfortable in their interactions, and that makes them more effective in engaging people. People who come in with a "savior complex," expecting to quickly solve people's problem, are the ones who drop out. Companionship seems to help people to get in touch with their common humanity with people they serve and with their own past struggles. This is not always easy for volunteers to do, but it is crucial if they are to be effective in engaging the people who are served through the Community Lunch. Those who are most resistant to simply walking alongside people in companionship and engaging them as fellow human beings, who want to "save them," are the ones who do not last very long as Community Lunch volunteers. Paradoxically, learning companionship provides people with more realistic expectations of what they can accomplish, but through helping them to relax and enjoy the companionship process, it allows them to be more effective in engaging people in a process of developing hope and confidence that they can improve their lives.

Kae's observations about the staff and volunteers speak to the means by which both the companion and the companioned are transformed. She also offers a couple of stories from her own experience that further illustrate that point. Once, when Kae was feeling overwhelmed by the intensity of the lunch setting, she went outside for some fresh air. She found a milk crate and sat down to clear her head. Soon, people came out from the lunch and started to talk with her, thanking her for the lunch and her work there. Kae realized they were offering companionship back to her and that they were seeking a mutual relationship, not a one-up, one-down relationship. Another time, early on in her involvement, she was looking for somewhere to sit, and didn't see any familiar faces. Then a woman waved her over, saying, "come sit next to me." The woman was able to welcome and companion Kae in a simple but profound way. As Kae noted, "That is the thing about the companionship. You come face to face with what could bring you down. The companionship is a trade off. It is ministering and being ministered to."

EqUUal Access Promotes Equality & Access for Unitarian Universalists with Disabilities

Rev. Barbara F. Meyers, Community Minister, Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation
com_minister@mpuuc.org

Our congregation is part of a 400-year old religious movement which has roots in Europe and the U.S. The Unitarian movement was born in the Transylvanian region of central Europe during the 16th century. It was advanced in England by some of the philosophers whose ideas are incorporated into the U.S. Declaration of Independence, and later in the U.S. by Transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Julia Ward Howe. The organization we know today resulted from the merger in 1961 of the Unitarians with the Universalists, who advocated a religion emphasizing love rather than fear. Today in the United States we have about 220,000 adults, children and youth.

The Mission of the Mental Health Caucus of EqUUal Access is serve people with mental health difficulties and their families by:

- Advocating to eliminate their isolation and marginalization in congregational life and in society.
- Reducing ministerial burdens through enhanced pastoral care co-ministry.
- Increasing congregational knowledge of local mental health resources.
- Promoting mental health work in UU context using our Caring Congregations curriculum.

We live in a society that devalues people with mental health issues. Our special task as the mental health caucus is to counter these negative forces, replacing them with education, understanding and welcoming into our religious communities.

We shall work to accomplish our mission through the following actions:

- Addressing obstacles to full participation in all UU activities for those with mental health challenges.
- Educating ministers and congregations about mental health challenges in pastoral care, participation, and behavioral covenants.
- Developing and advocating for mental health accessibility policies and practices that endorse and ensure the full inclusion of people with mental health issues in a non-discriminatory manner.
- Affirming the spiritual gifts and needs of those with mental health issues.
- Helping congregations to identify and use local mental health resources that support Unitarian Universalist beliefs
- Advocating for these social justice causes in local, regional and national venues
- Encouraging all people with mental health issues and their allies within the denomination to join in this effort.
- Promoting our Caring Congregation curriculum to help accomplish these tasks

For more information visit <http://www.equualaccess.org/>.

50 Years Later, Mental Health Care in America Still Hard to Come By

The 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy signing historic legislation known as the Community Mental Health Act (back when the name of legislature plainly reflected what was in it). It was the country's boldest attempt to bring mental health care into the modern era by moving people out of inpatient psychiatric hospitals, and put them back in the community where they belong, making mental health care affordable and readily available to all Americans. For the complete story, please click <https://www.votervoice.net/link/clickthrough/ext/316026.aspx>

Critical Mental Health Resources for College Students

With 44% of college students reporting symptoms of depression, it was critical to address the mental health concerns of these young adults. The staff writers of On-Line Colleges offer a comprehensive discussion of the most common issues facing students, from depression and anxiety to substance abuse and eating disorders. Most importantly, however, they clearly outline several options for finding treatment and support. <http://www.onlinecolleges.net/for-students/mental-health-resources>.

A Blast From the Past—Do you remember when....

In 1992, NIMH funded a two-year collaborative educational venture that brought together the Missouri Institute of Mental Health, **Pathways to Promise**, and the St. Louis Science Center to develop *Mental Health: The Brain Matters*, a permanent exhibit housed in the St. Louis Science Center. This exhibit educates more than 3,000 museum visitors each month, and each visitor learns something about one of the six content areas addressed by the exhibit: depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, substance abuse, and the brain's relationship to each of these conditions. The exhibit is designed to introduce and continually reinforce three core messages: (1) mental and addictive disorders are biologically based; (2) anyone can develop a mental illness or addiction; and (3) mental and addictive disorders can be treated.

In addition to the permanent exhibit at the St. Louis Science Center, the NIMH grant funded the development of a traveling exhibit. This exhibit has been used by several hundred faith communities over the past four years, most often as the centerpiece of displays in exhibit booths at national meetings. The exhibit was also used by Tipper Gore during a congressional staff briefing in 1994 devoted to the need for substance abuse and mental health benefits in health insurance programs.

A key element in both the St. Louis Science Center exhibit and the Pathways traveling exhibit was a multimedia CD-ROM program called *Mental Health Studios*. This interactive program combines sound, text, graphics, charts, and video to provide scientific information about addiction and mental illness in an engaging and entertaining manner. A rigorous evaluation of this program documented its efficacy in altering the attitudes about mental illness and substance abuse in a positive direction.

The Missouri Department of Mental Health was enthusiastic enough about *Mental Health Studios* to underwrite the cost of distribution of this program to the 250 largest high schools in Missouri.



Congressional Staff Briefing on Mental Illness and Substance Abuse Disorders, April 1994, Washington DC.
MIMH Continuing Education Director John Kretschmann, Tipper Gore and
Pathways Executive Director Jennifer Shifrin showcase *The Brain Matters* travelling exhibit.

Pathways to Promise

Phone: 314-516-8489 Fax: 314-516-8405 Email: Info@Pathways2Promise.org

For a complete description of materials below please visit www.Pathways2Promise.org

Support Pathways by becoming a member

Check one:

Individual \$25
 Congregation/Other Groups \$50
 Regional Body / Organization Chapter \$150
 National Religious Body/Other National Organizations \$500
 Honorary/Lifetime Membership - \$500

Additional Contributions to Pathways are welcome and are tax deductible. \$ _____ In honor or memory of _____

Item	Quantity	Cost	Amount	Item	Quantity	Cost	Amount
The Companionship Series by WC Rennebohm Three guidebooks on mental health ministry for clergy, congregational leaders, and laity.		20.00		Pathways Sample Packet includes one each of pamphlets and bulletin inserts below		\$3.00	
#1 Mental Health Ministry The framework for spiritual care		\$7.50		When Mental Illness Strikes in a Family of Faith A pamphlet for families or clergy working Quantity: <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Version		\$0.20	
#2 The Way of Companionship Five core practices to support healing		\$7.50		Who Has Mental Illness? A pamphlet about mental illness, resources & community outreach. Quantity: <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish		\$0.20	
#3 Organizing a Mental Health Ministry Team A step-by-step process		\$7.50		The following BULLETIN INSERTS are available in quantities of 25 only:			
Book: Souls in the Hands of a Tender God by WC Rennebohm		\$15.00		Reaching Out to Someone With Mental Illness		\$3.50	
Book: Caring for the Soul: R'fuat Hanefesh - A Mental Health Resource & Study Guide by RF Address		\$15.00		Mental Illness: Community Outreach		\$3.50	
Book: Advocating for Someone with a Mental Illness by S Nesch		\$13.00		Creating Caring Congregations for People with Mental Illness and Their Families		\$3.50	
Walking Together: A Training Workshop Interactive activities for faith communities supporting people with mental illness		\$15.00		Responding to People with Mental Illness in the Congregation & Community		\$3.50	
Pathways to Partnership (Basic Manual) # of each: <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish		\$6.75		Rabbi Who Sinned? Myths and Realities About Mental Illness		\$3.50	
Pathways to Understanding Manual For Instructors & Students		\$20.00		Children and Mental Disorders: Myths & Facts		\$3.50	
Caring Congregations: Observations and Commentary		\$6.75		Putting the Pieces Together: Correcting the Myths of Mental Health and Aging Quantity: <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish		\$3.50	
Worship Resources A follow-up to Caring Congregations		\$6.75		NOTE: Minimum \$5 order please. Large orders or orders to Canada may incur additional charges.	TOTAL ENCLOSED		
The Bible As A Resource Materials for sermons and articles		\$6.75					

Name: _____

Faith Group, Congregation or Organization _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____ Email: _____

Comments? _____

Please mail this form with your check or money order (credit cards not accepted) payable to Pathways to:

Pathways To Promise
 5400 Arsenal St.
 St. Louis, MO 63139
Thank you for your order!