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A Season of Lent, 2022

By Eric Stroo, LMHC

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

John 1:5

As I write on this Ash Wednesday, 2022, our world has endured the strains and divisions of a two-year pandemic; it is witnessing the increasing evidence of environmental crisis; and now it has been engulfed in a darkness of a different kind. The invasion of the Ukraine casts a dark shadow across a continent, across a planet, in fact. It violates assumptions of sovereignty and civility that have prevailed for most our lifetimes.

The impact of these crises is more immediate for some of us than it is for others. And yet regardless of our personal circumstances, we are confronted by a demand to face the seriousness of these challenges, to “get real.”

The haunting incantation of Ash Wednesday—“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return”—seems to be a reverberation of the news, as we learn with each passing day of the destruction and casualties of war, natural disaster, and pestilence. Our mortal lives are finite; the planet is increasingly inhospitable; and the stability of our institutions cannot be taken for granted.

(Continued on page 2)



Meeting the Challenge of the Times



When I try to recall when various things happened over the past two years, I have the most challenging time. Perhaps you share that experience. I remember where I was on March 10, 2020 with clarity. Our clinical director, Matt Percy, was reviewing the structure, ethics and procedures of the practice of teletherapy with our staff. Talk about the mystery of timing and grace!

The next day, one of our colleagues was diagnosed with Covid-19, and everything changed. In the subsequent weeks, we worked to make the needed shifts in how we provide counseling services. We developed new administrative practices. We learned how to gather virtually to sustain the sense of community that is such an important dynamic of our work together. While I remember the efforts that we made to provide

(Continued on page 3)

The Samaritan Community

Clinical Staff

Kay Abramson, MS
 John Baumann, MDiv
 Mary Kay Brennan, MSW
 Grace Carpenter, MS
 William Collins, MS
 Sean Eagon, MA
 Robert Erickson, MS
 March Gunderson, MDiv, MEd
 Mark Hougum, PhD, MDiv
 Colleen Kelley, MC
 Leo Kiralla, MA
 Natividad Lamug, MA
 Isaiah Lin, PsyD
 Heather Macdonald, PsyD
 Matthew Percy, PsyD.
 Anne Perry, MA, EdD
 Jim Ramsey, MA
 Beverley Shrumm, MC
 Jonathan Siehl, MDiv, MSW
 Jocelyn Skillman, MA
 Kimberly Snow, PsyD
 Mary Stanton-Nurse, MA
 Gary Steeves, MEd
 Eric Stroo, MA
 Tita Subercaseaux, MS
 Neal Teng, PhD
 Deb Thomas, MS
 Katherine Yoder, MA

Counseling Locations

With the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic, our primary “location” has evolved to be our secure online teletherapy platform. As reopening becomes possible, we will strategize resumption of in-person services.

Seattle

Main Office (Green Lake)
 Rainier Beach Presbyterian Church

West Seattle

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish
 West Side Presbyterian Church

Shoreline

Shoreline Free Methodist Church

Bellevue

Bellevue Presbyterian Church
 St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church

Renton

Fairwood Community United Methodist
 St. Stephen the Martyr Parish

Spokane

First Presbyterian Church of Spokane
 Opportunity Presbyterian Church

Board of Directors

Rev. Leland Seese, Chair
 Douglas Farnham, Treasurer
 Rev. William McIvor, Secretary
 Mary Denny
 Colleen Chinen
 Doug LeRoy
 Liz Covey
 Rev. Scott Lumsden, ex officio

Administrative Staff

Beverley Shrumm, CEO/President
 Matthew Percy, Clinical Director
 James Ramsey, Director of Facilities
 Heather Macdonald, Director of
 Testing and Assessment
 Eric Stroo, Community Relations
 Director
 Katherine Yoder, Director of Admin-
 istrative Services
 Jesse Dobner, A/R & Billing
 Min Park, A/R & Billing
 Emerald Lynch, Admin Assistant
 Amisha Patel, Intake Coordinator

The main office of Samaritan Center of Puget Sound is located at 564 NE Ravenna Blvd, Seattle, WA 98115.

We can be reached by calling 206-527-2266.

More information about therapists, locations and programs can be found on our website at www.samaritanps.org.

(A Season of Lent, continued from page 1)

A Christian response over the centuries has been, after Ash Wednesday, to enter into a season of preparation and reflection in anticipation of Easter. This time of preparation, the season of Lent, is an invitation to “get real.” The logic of it goes something like this: If Easter is to be an occasion of deliverance for us, from the consequences of our own failings—personal, national, global—then we must *see unblinkingly* and then actually *turn from* the evils that we have participated in. It does not happen easily. It does not come for free. The acts of will or discipline in the season of Lent come as a reminder of that. A timely reminder that freedom is not free.

Our struggle to contain and combat the pandemic has not come for free. It has involved learning and sacrifice. Our struggle to contain and combat climate change has not and will not come for free. And defiance of the brutal invasion of Ukraine has not come for free—most clearly demonstrated in the courage and sacrifice of the Ukrainian people.

As an agency committed to the mental health of our clients, and by extension to the healthy thriving of our community, we at Samaritan Center are invested daily in this Lenten activity of “getting real.” It is in a sense our life’s work. We embrace the necessity of facing squarely, honestly, and lovingly the realities of our conflicts—internal and external—and grip that past hurts, fear, and anger can have in our hearts. In the hope of Easter joy, in the hope of deliverance from the darkness of these times, we remain committed to doing our small part in the healing and transformation of our community—one life, one relationship, at a time.

(Challenge of the Times, continued from page 1)

care in this radically changed environment, it's as if the days, weeks and months are a blur. 2020 and 2021 were one long age.

That said, I think it's important to acknowledge that there have been significant accomplishments along the way. In each of these two years, Samaritan provided approximately 19,000 hours of psychotherapy and psychological assessment, serving about 500 adults and youth each week. We continued our training and consultation with these wonderfully resilient colleagues: Dr. Jeffrey Sung, our consulting psychiatrist; Eric Strom, JD, PhD, in law and ethics; Jim Furrow, PhD, in working with couples and families; Bill Collins, PhD, LMFT, focusing on Internal Family Systems; and Larry Carlson, MSW, working within a psychodynamic frame.

We are taking forward our embrace of the Danielsen Institute's SERT model of the integration of the spiritual, existential, religious and theological aspects of providing faith-integrative therapy. We've experienced something of "the great resignation" as several of our senior therapists are retiring. We have also welcomed five new therapists and five administrative staff members. Virtual counseling sessions are not the same as meeting in person, and there is a sense of loss in that for both client and therapist. At the same time, we have been able to extend our psychotherapy services to many people who would not be able come to one of our offices.



Rev. Lee Seese, our board chair, recently introduced us to Walter Brueggemann's book, *Spirituality of the Psalms*, in which he writes about the process of transformation. We are in the phase he describes as "disorientation" where, both individually and collectively, we experience incoherence, loss of balance, fear, anger, grief, weariness. Rev. Brueggemann writes that it is necessary to go through a period of disorientation in order to move to a new orientation. On most days, I find that I think about matters of faith -- what I believe -- as if in a foundational way. I experience love, gratitude and hope, and I hold in my heart the contradictions. While we don't yet know enough to create a fully realized pathway for the future, we know that we are guided by our mission and our values. We are meant to be an expression of God's compassion. I hold to what we cannot see or know, to Mystery, beyond the tragedies and blessings of this life.

For 60 years, Samaritan Center of Puget Sound has been committed to providing high-quality mental health services that are affordable and accessible to all. We provide psychotherapy that is relational and spiritually grounded for individuals of all ages, as well as for couples and families. We are attentive to the needs of those who are underserved, offering care at a reduced fee. In addition to counseling, we offer psychological testing and therapeutic assessment, continuing education and training for therapists, and support groups. Currently, we provide services both in-person and remotely throughout the state of Washington.

DEPARTURES

In February, **Beth Hess** concluded her work after 23 years with the agency. A graduate of Wheaton College, she went on to obtain an MS in Counseling from Kansas State University and worked for 11 years as a high school counselor and addiction counselor. In 1988, Beth earned her MSW from the University of Washington, and was hired the following year at Samaritan Center (then Presbyterian Counseling Service). For the last 33 years, she has served clients with her wonderful clinical and pastoral skills, securing the admiration and affection of her colleagues.



Thirty-three years ago I sat in a Sunday school class taught by a therapist at what was then Presbyterian Counseling Service. As I heard about his agency, with its mission to provide affordable high quality faith based counseling, I knew I wanted to work there. Six months later that dream came true and I've been grateful ever since. It's been a joy to labor together with colleagues who share my heart for giving care to hurting people. I will ever be grateful that God guided me here.

Michael Rogers departs Samaritan Center this month, March 2022, after 43 years in the mental health field, the last 30 of which he has devoted to this agency. Michael's work has been a ministry in every sense; he came to the agency in 1989 as both a clinician (MFT) and an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA). He completed his graduate studies at Fuller Seminary, with an MA in Marriage and Family Therapy in 1988 and an MDiv in 1989, specializing in Cross-Cultural Studies. For seven years, Michael served as Clinical Director at the agency, and he leaves with the profound thanks and respect of his colleagues and clients.

This formal calling to soul-care is concluding the way it started decades ago – by hearing a still small voice, a prompting, a sense of 'knowing in my bones' (not a reasoned list of pros and cons) that was then acted on. I'm grateful for having been a witness to countless healing journeys. I'm also expectant as I imagine what's next, including more time with our growing family. For now and forever I'm listening...



ARRIVALS

Welcoming New Clinical Staff

Newly onboarded clinicians and admin staff have been hard at work settling into systems and ramping up their clinical and administrative work - we could not be more thrilled to have them joining us.



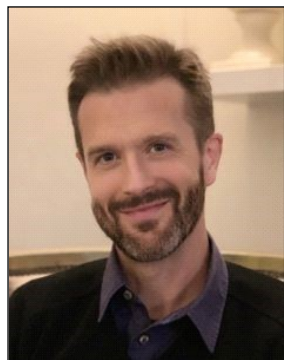
Isaiah Lin M.A., PsyD is officially joining our staff as a licensed psychologist. Isaiah brings a wealth of experience in supporting holistic counseling as well as psychological assessments and will continue to scaffold the incredible ministry outreach and assessments that Samaritan Center provides.

and families, especially those experiencing life transitions.

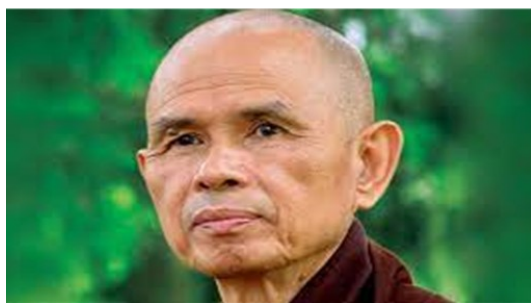
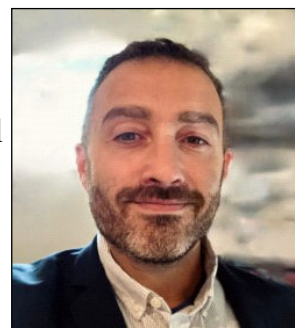
Mary Stanton-Nurse M.A., LMFTA is officially joining us as a licensed therapist. Mary brings immense passion for supporting individuals, couples,



Sean Eagon M.A., LMHCA, NCC joins us from Spokane where we are delighted to have a burgeoning hub of counseling action. He has a beautiful range of approaches and "works to model unconditional acceptance of each person, helping to foster a strong therapeutic partnership."



Leo Kiralla M.A., LMHC is in his third year pursuing his PhD at Fielding University and brings an emphasis on "humanistic-existential and psychodynamic" approaches to therapy that are "deeply relational." Leo also brings a passion for the ministry of pastoral clinical assessments that Samaritan Center is honored to provide.



*Thich Nhat Hanh (1926--2022)
Poet, Zen Master, Peace Activist*

For Warmth

I hold my face between my hands.
No, I am not crying.
I hold my face between my hands
to keep my loneliness warm --
two hands protecting,
two hands nourishing,
two hands to prevent
my soul from leaving me
in anger.

Donor Recognition

Here follows a list of donors to the work of Samaritan Center for the year 2021, excluding those who chose to remain anonymous. Our donors make possible the vital work that we do in our community, including a flexible fee schedule and ongoing training. We regret any inaccuracies and delays in expressing our gratitude to you. Thank you so very much.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Kay Abramson | Peggy Hansen | Craig W Rhyne |
| Sharon and Doug Andrews | Susan and Dennis Hegedus | Kerry G. Robinson <i>In tribute to Bill Robinson</i> |
| Brodie Ann Bain | Elizabeth Hiatt <i>In memory of Mary Lousie Hendrix Bagby</i> | Michael E. Rogers |
| Sheryl Baker | Holman Cahill Garrett Ives Oliver & Andersen PLLC | Nancy Scott |
| Jill M. Ballo | Frank and Patricia Holman | Leland Seese |
| John and Marsha Baumann | Mark and Susan Houglum | Arthur Shrumm |
| Peter N. Benson | Lizann Jones | Beverley Shrumm |
| Bethany Presbyterian Church | Ji Soo Kim | Jon & Judy Siehl |
| The Blackbaud Giving Fund | Christine and Erik Kindem | Sisters of the Holy Names <i>In tribute to Paul Mottle</i> |
| Vernon L. Boyles | Carolyn G. Kinsman | Gary F. & Janet M. Skinner |
| Patricia E. Burgin | Dan & Karen Labbee | Ann M. Slater |
| Dennie Carcelli | Evelyn A. Lambert | Lynn and Tim Smythe |
| Joan L. Carter | Denise Lentini | Southminster Presbyterian Church |
| David and Brenda Chamness | Lester W Mittelstaedt Foundation | Alan and Amy Spanne |
| Mona and David Chicks | Tamar Libicki and Sergey Feldman | St. Andrew's Lutheran Church |
| Thomas and Berta Cohen | William A. Longbrake <i>In tribute to Martha Longbrake</i> | Cynthia & Steve St. Clair |
| Jim and Jan Coleman <i>In tribute to Midge Halberg</i> | Sandra and Frederick Mabbott | St. Thomas Episcopal Church |
| Kathy and Bill Collins <i>In memory of Douglas A. Anderson</i> | Sally Mackey | William F. Starks |
| Sheila B. Collins & Logan Reichert | Paul Martin | Jack D. Stevenson |
| Carole Conger | Martin-Fabert Foundation | David J. Stiltner |
| Covenant Shores Retirement Community | David McIvor | Eric Stroo |
| Mary C. Denny <i>In honor of Kay Abramson</i> | Karen and Rick McMichael | Maria Teresa Subercaseaux |
| Mary C. Denny <i>In memory of Gale Kennedy</i> | Marsha M. Meyers | Beverly A. Taylor |
| Maureen J. Dightman | Michele Whitehead | Neal Teng |
| Nancy E. Ellingham | Anna Joyce and Richard Nelson | Linus Tumbleson |
| Emerald Heights Community Grants | Sandra and Marvin Nelson | Ned (Henry) and (Leah) Joyce Turner |
| Doug and Amy Farnham | Roger and Joyelle Neubauer | Kathleen Tyrrell |
| Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund | Alan S. Oliver | Beatrice M. Van Tulder |
| Lois M. Fish | Kathryn A. Paauw | Lorelyn R. Vanderbilt |
| Thomas and Marybeth Fox | Patricia L. Pedegana | Robert and Barbara Welsh |
| Michael and Donelyn Gamble | Matthew Percy | Louise L. Witt <i>In tribute to Barb Lehner</i> |
| Beth Geense | Edyth Phillips | Tom and Billie Ylvisaker |
| Kathryn and Julien Geiser | James Ramsey | Gail and Mitchell Yockey |
| Robert and Cindy Gibbs <i>In tribute to Robert Gibbs</i> | | Brian Zorotovich <i>In honor of March Gunderson</i> |
| Linda B. Glenicki | | |
| Richard K. Gould MD | | |
| March Gunderson | | |
| Steve F. Gustaveson | | |

Vital and Timely Wisdom

Attending the Mindset of Loss

from Stephen Levine's book, *Unattended Sorrow*

Grief does not so much end as it does change in its intensity and duration. Our states of mind are constantly in flux, be they unpredictable sorrow, fear, love, sweet remembrance, loss or helplessness. Uninvited sorrow cries itself to sleep.

We rarely know all that we feel. States of mind arise uninvited, while random thoughts speak their mind. When we *investigate* our feelings instead of blindly following them, relating to them with mercy and mindfulness instead of only relating from them with fear and despair, we can glimpse the difference between freedom and bondage.

Investigation is a prime example of relating to a feeling or state of mind: noting its changing realities, how it feels in the body, how it keeps changing, “going through changes” in the mind, as it weaves through its constituent states, observing the fear, the doubt, the expectation, the disappointment, etc., that compose it, watching how fear may stimulate it and how mercy may pacify it.

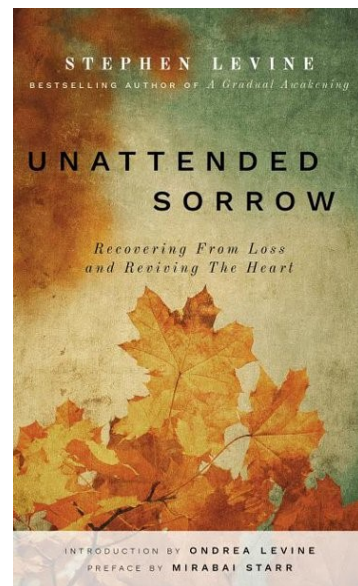
Anger, fear, doubt, sadness—all emotions, oppressive or otherwise—are a *process*, not a single state of mind. They are composed of constantly changing individual emotions. For instance, if we observe anger, which we've always believed to be a single state of mind, we find that it turns out to be a multi-leveled process: a moment of blocked wanting, of dissatisfaction, followed by a moment of frustration, followed by a rapid unfolding and loop-like return through fear and pride and doubt and judgment and distrust, alternately shadow boxing and finger pointing, merciless with the world and ourselves.

Unresolved grief results from not only the loss of a loved one but also from the way that life roller-coasters between clinging for dear life and a hollowness in the pit of the stomach.

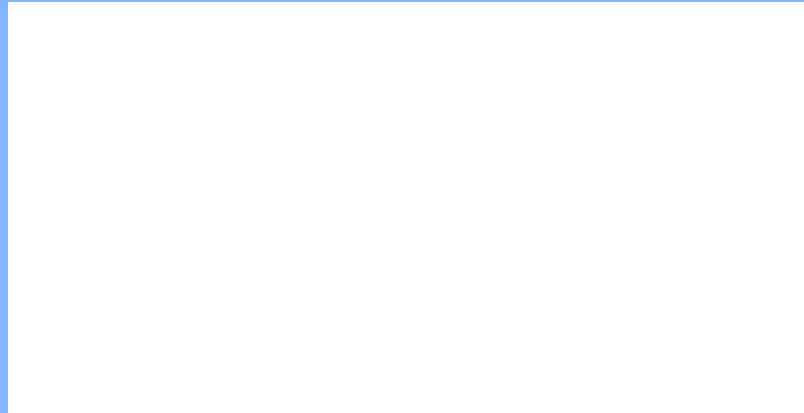
Most of our resentments in life, no matter how guilefully disguised by the mind, are actually a grief reaction spawned from earlier feelings of loss. Most feelings of aversion—most of those feelings of being ill at ease, of doubt, and of unwillingness to go further—are conditioned, even habituated, by a previous sense of safety lost. Indeed, we can see that even our tendency to judge others is an aspect of grief: a feeling of “not-enoughness,” which we long to be otherwise. Every moment of jealousy, confusion, or hatred arises from the belly of sorrow.

Though our various levels of grief may try to persuade us that it is fruitless, our healing lies in nonetheless allowing a merciful awareness to sink through the layers of our grief and explore what might lie beyond our pain. It may take being lost in the maze of feeling totally hopeless and helpless before we can eventually surrender our pain, open it to investigation and eventual healing. But what else can we do?

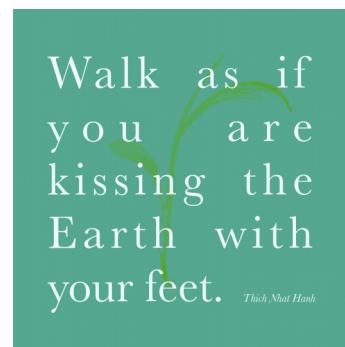
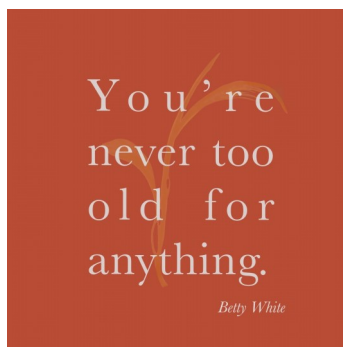
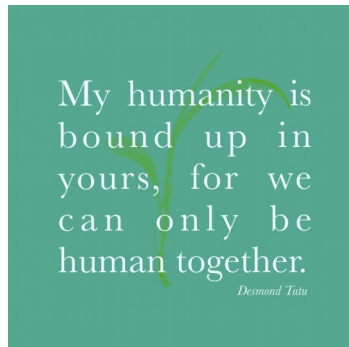
What lies beyond the disquiet of simultaneously clinging to and condemning life is the spaciousness of the heart that becomes uncovered by a liberating awareness.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



INSTAGRAM UPDATE - with special gratitude to the sacred worss of recently departed Desmond Tutu, Betty White, and Thich Nhat Hanh. (#love)



We are delighted to share that our following on Instagram @samaritancenterofps has continued to rise! We have an audience of 80 (up from a handful when we first started to revive our use of this social media platform). Jocelyn Skillman LMHC curates a daily dose of inspiration and produces one of these logo-echoed pieces to share with the community with a dose of 'hashtags' e.g. #love #inspiration #telehealth to promote visibility of our organization and to bless those who scroll through and encounter us in the interweb!