



Resources for Faith Leaders

Addressing Mental Health in Faith Communities

The following resources are available on the Web at the addresses noted. These sites are not endorsed by Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County. However, they all seem to be working towards three common goals shared by Mental Health Connection:

- Creating a better understanding of mental illness
- Providing better faith support for congregation members struggling with mental illness, and
- Decreasing stigma surrounding brain disorders.

Using these resources, faith leaders can find sermons, prayers, inspirational pieces and other thoughts and ideas they may want to use in their own congregations. Other information on the site will give faith leaders a deeper understanding about mental illness and the role religion can play in helping people reach for recovery.

This list is only a starting point and not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, it will point faith leaders in a direction where they can delve deeper to find support for their needs in communicating with their congregations about mental illness. They will find details about activities other communities are implementing. Some sites offer information for specific faiths, including their view of mental illness.

Mental Health Ministries

<http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/>

Mental Health Ministries is an ecumenical, interfaith outreach program with a mission of educating faith leaders and lay persons. Its goal is to decrease stigma associated with mental illnesses in our faith communities

NAMI FaithNet

<http://www.faithnetnami.org/>

FaithNet NAMI is a network of members and friends of NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill). It works as an outreach to all religions, not as a religious network. It has found success because all the major religions have the basic

tenets of giving care and showing compassion to those in need. Its founders hope to:

- Facilitate the development within the faith community of a non-threatening, supportive environment for those with serious mental illness and their families
Point out the value of one's spirituality in the recovery process
- Point out the need for spiritual strength for caretakers
- Educate clergy and congregations about the biologic basis and characteristics of mental illness, and
- Encourage the faith community to bring about hope and help for all who are affected by mental illness.

Pathways to Promise: Interfaith Ministries and Prolonged Mental Illness

<http://www.pathways2promise.org/>

Pathways to Promise is an interfaith technical assistance and resource center which offers liturgical and educational materials, program models and networking information. It promotes a caring ministry for people with mental illness and their families. Pathways' resources are used by people at all levels of faith group structures, from local congregations to regional and national staff.

Other websites with specific faith orientations include:

- American Association of Pastoral Counselors
<http://www.aapc.org/resources.cfm#websites>
- Anabaptist Disabilities Network
<http://www.adnetonline.org/>
- Beside Quiet Waters
<http://www.besidequietwaters.com/>
- Episcopal Mental Illness Network (EMIN)
<http://www.eminnews.org/>
- Faith Ways NAMI Minnesota
<http://mn.nami.org/faithways.html>
- Lutheran (ELCA) Mental Illness Network
<http://www.elca.org/dcs/candlelighting.html>
- Mental Health Chaplaincy
<http://www.mentalhealthchaplain.org/>
- NAMI Indianapolis - Faith Communities Education Project
<http://www.congregationalresources.org/mentalhealth.asp>

- OASSIS (Organization for Attempters and Survivors of Suicide in Interfaith Services)
<http://www.oassis.org/>
- Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness (PSMIN) "Honest Talk about Serious Mental Illness"
<http://www.pcusa.org/health/usa/resources/mental-illness.htm>
- Sr. Ann Catherine and John Veierstahler
<http://www.hopetohealing.com/>
- United Church of Christ Mental Illness Network
<http://www.min-ucc.org/>
- Virginia Interfaith Committee on Mental Illness Ministries
<http://www.vaumc.org/gm/micom.htm>