

NIGHTLY NEWS:

SAN FRANCISCO

NIGHT MINISTRY



One of San Francisco Night Ministry's mottos is rekindling hope. As an organization, we have been reflecting on this motto, asking our staff, partners, and friends, "How are you finding hope in these uncertain times?"

We are living through times that feel Biblical in nature, yet global in intensity and scale, including plague/pandemic, systemic racism/tribalism, militarism and endless war, and oppressive economic disparity. Yet there are also myriad signs of the world's basic goodness rising up to these times, from mass prophetic protest to the smallest acts of kindness and humanity.

Rekindling hope is not a choice between Pollyanna optimism and despairing resignation, both of which are inert. Wise hope is the "good news" every wisdom tradition proclaims in its own way: that an end to suffering is possible. Wise hope inspires us to act fiercely while releasing attachment to outcomes. Ultimately, the outcomes are always out of our hands!

Night Ministry remains committed to doing our part. We serve in our corner of the world, and always out to the margins, walking the streets and answering calls late into the night, every night of the year. We meet people where they are at and help them make meaning for themselves.

Night Ministry rekindles wise hope when we bear witness to the suffering we encounter, and we work to meet it with love. Rekindling hope includes the simplest of acts: a smile, a listening presence, an embrace, a word of encouragement, a prayer — anything that reveals our shared humanity and divinity. Such acts are the kindling that grow the fire of hope already present in each and every heart. Rekindling hope is primal and sacred and communal.

My hope is that your hope will be rekindled as you read these news updates in our various areas of service: **Night Ministry** (nightly walks on the streets, bars, coffee shops, SROs, etc.); **Care Line** (nightly spiritual care telephone service open to everyone); **Community Programs** (multi-faith gatherings, such as Open Cathedrals and Meditation Group); **Clinical Pastoral Education** (accredited field training for emerging ministers, chaplains, and spiritual leaders); and **Operations** (the support work that keeps us going).

May you find a little more warmth in your heart on the coldest of nights, and may you pass it along to rekindle hope in the hearts of your neighbors.

Rev. Trent Thornley,
Executive Director



NIGHT MINISTRY

HOPE ON THE STREETS

Trent asked us all to reflect on what is giving us hope these days. One of the main things that is giving me hope is seeing how so many people pulled



together so quickly to help our unhoused neighbors. While government at all levels has acted quickly to protect the housed and slowly if at all to protect the unhoused, the community just jumped in and started getting things done. As the weeks have drawn on many new collaborations have emerged and deepened. Night Ministry and those we serve have benefitted repeatedly from these collaborations.

Early on we were getting hand sanitizer here and there from individuals and always on the cusp of running out. Now, thanks to connections made through the new collaborations, we have two steady suppliers of sanitizer, Endless West and a group of individuals who wanted to remain unnamed. We're still looking for a steady source of small bottles to put it in for distribution, but have managed to hand out nearly 900 bottles so far. We had a donation of 1200 paper face masks from the Golden Gate Association of the Northern California Northern Nevada conference of the UCC and an additional 1000 from the NCNC, so we were able to share with the Coalition and the Faithful Fools to help get them out to folks more quickly. We've also been blessed with over 130 cloth face masks, mostly from Bethany UMC, but also from individuals who are sewing them for us. Unity Lutheran in South San Francisco configured a socially distant sewing circle and made us 25 blankets to distribute. Grace Cathedral's stitching ministry has been keeping us well supplied with lovely hats and scarves. Bethany UMC just recently made 150 sack meals for us to distribute.

This kind of abundant generosity and collaboration gives me hope. More importantly, it gives us here at Night Ministry the tools we need to help our unhoused neighbors. It all conveys that someone cares how they are surviving in these difficult times. Sometimes an offer of a bottle of sanitizer can start a conversation that goes much deeper, too. So many of the folks we have distributed items to not only offer their thanks to Night Ministry, but make a point of asking us to thank the people who supplied us. So thank all of you who have helped us help those we serve, both for the material items you have provided and for the hope you give to them and to us.

Rev. Valerie McEntee,
Night Minister



Photos taken pre-pandemic with permission. Night Minister Valerie McEntee with Assistant Night Minister Daniel Borysewicz (above) and a parishioner (below).



NIGHT MINISTERS HAVE DISTRIBUTED OVER 900 BOTTLES OF HAND SANITIZER.

POWER OF PRESENCE

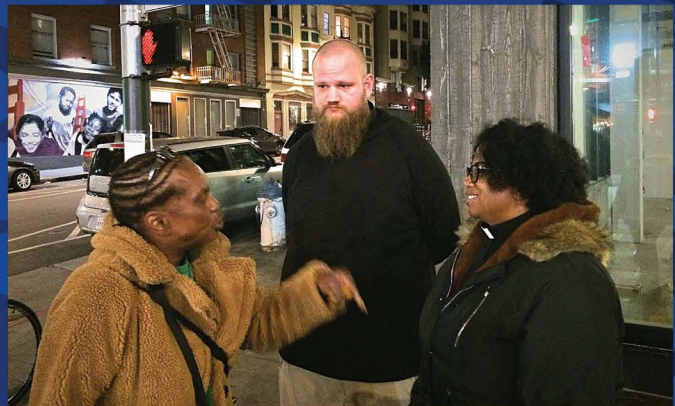
As the Night Ministry, our mission is to be an indiscriminate presence of peace, support, affirmation and advocacy on the streets of San Francisco. This includes being present in situations of conflict and tension.

I have, on several occasions, been in the difficult situation of trying to apply this in situations of confrontation between civilians and law enforcement. For the most part, these interactions have been a great illustration of how simple presence can make an enormous difference. My personal go-to when I encounter these confrontations has been to simply be an observer and a visible presence. Just visibly standing as a peaceful witness and wearing the collar often has a powerful effect on all parties involved. The language and level of interaction tends to change, perhaps not even consciously, simply due to the visible presence of clergy. It also sends a message to all who are involved: "I am watching, I care, I see your pain and struggle, and am here for you. I will not close my eyes to oppression or abuse, I am here to advocate for peace, love, compassion and nonviolence."

Of course, simple silent presence is not always enough. My strategy in case of possible escalation or abuse has been to add the element of filming what is going on with my phone, and if this does not suffice, to verbally advocate for restraint in a constructive manner which honors the humanity of all who are involved as beloved children of God.

When working with the most marginalized and vulnerable people in our community, the issue of systemic racism and other forms of oppression is ever-present, and illustrates the deep flaws in the common American approaches to houselessness, poverty and "crime". It also illustrates the power and effectiveness of active pastoral presence, love, and solidarity, which lie at the core of our ministry.

By Rev. Thom Mueller,
Assistant Night Minister



Photos taken pre-pandemic and used with permission. Assistant Night Minister Thom Muller with CPE student Dr. Karma McDonald with folks during a night walk.

FINDING HOPE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

I am finding hope in these uncertain times and honestly – every day of my life because of God and with God. I need to begin there for without my deep-rooted knowing, belief and faith in our Lord, I would have, at many times throughout my life, fallen into deep despair rather, than living a hope-filled life – a God-filled life. A life in which God enables me to recognize the many blessings in the midst of despair and suffering; to see and embrace the goodness, preciousness and worth of each human being and all of creation; to heed the blessed "call" to serve God and God's children and to love ALL without measure. This gives me hope, for God is my living Hope... and Love...and Life!

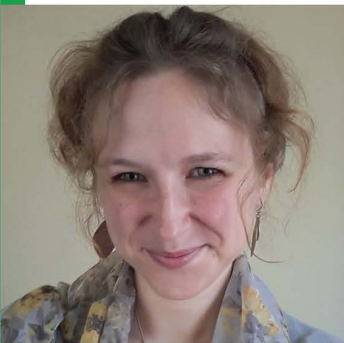
By Rev. Monique Ortiz,
Director of Community Programs

CARE LINE

HOPE ON THE PHONES

I'm finding hope in uncertain times in the ways that people are responding to the current crisis by working to fix broken systems that have been pushed to a breaking point by the pandemic. I see this happening on all levels, from the global (WHO) to the personal (changing mental health or social routines).

I'm glad that at Night Ministry we are able to be part of this change! At the Care Line, we're responding to the crisis by expanding our hours (Now taking calls from 8pm to 4am) and going virtual. Because our volunteers are now able to take calls from home and because of a massive outreach effort, we've been able to onboard and train 27 new volunteers in the last month and a half and have more signed up to train. Additionally, as we continue outreach to the community, call volume has continued to go up!



We're also implementing a new, more streamlined training system in which trainees can complete their initial trainings via video before completing their final trainings via live video conference and starting their training shifts. And we've adding more training ma-

terials for new trainees and existing volunteers on taking suicide calls and on helping callers with the current COVID-19 crisis!

We're looking forward to sharing more updates with you as we continue moving forward in this exciting new phase for the Care Line and as we work to meet the needs of our community in these challenging times.

By Kylie Svenson, MSW,
Interim Care Line Director

NEW CLC VOLUNTEER FROM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC



Hello! I'm Virginia Giglio, a volunteer in Pastoral Care and CPE trained Chaplain living in Ireland and a new CLC with SFNM. You might wonder why someone in Ireland would be volunteering with SFNM, but it really makes sense. I'm an American retired to Ireland and I've been side-lined from volunteering at St. Luke's Home for the elderly here in

Cork due to the Covid-19 crisis. Unfortunately, my visiting was considered a risk to vulnerable residents, several of whom are over 100 years old! I am not happy if I am not serving people in some way, and I have some skills. Two friends associated with SFNM – Brother Lilith Bear and the Reverend Unyong Statwick from Spokane (also a new volunteer) made me aware of SFNM's work. Because it's daytime in Cork when it's nighttime in San Francisco, it sounded like an ideal time to contribute! I undertook the CLC training and found it so valuable that I sat in on extra hours just for fun. Kudos to Kylie, Laura, and Trent! After shadowing seasoned CLCs, and being shadowed, and I am a full-fledged CLC, listening away to folks in my home country and feeling satisfied to be "doing my bit" for the US during tough times. So now you know why an Irishwoman with a Georgia accent and a wide awake morning voice is one of your colleagues, and I look forward to working with all of you and the clients of SFNM. A final word – when you are in tough times, you can always find someone who has it tougher. Find them, help them, and your joy temperature will go sky high. I've got a fever from working with SFNM!

Peace and Blessings,
Virginia Giglio, Care line Counselor

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

Want to put your heart of service into action?
We welcome new volunteers!

The Care Line hours are now hours 8PM – 4 AM.
Volunteer Care Line Counselors work in two shifts: 8PM - 12 MIDNIGHT and 10PM - 2AM.
We will train you, and you can work from home.
Flexible scheduling.

Daytime volunteers can help with promotions, events, and other projects.

Contact us at volunteer@sfnightministry.org

SPIRITUAL CARE BY PHONE – SFNM WEBINAR

We hosted a webinar entitled "Spiritual Care by Phone" on March 30, 2020. Over 100 chaplains, CPE educators, and seminary students attended.

The full video is on the website - sfnightministry.org/spiritual-care-by-phone-sfnm-webinar/
or (<https://rb.gy/x3jkwf>)

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

BLACK LIVES



MATTER

BLACK LIVES MATTER TO SF NIGHT MINISTRY

We are saddened, outraged, and exasperated by the police brutality and horrific killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and far too many other Black people. White supremacy is a collective spiritual crisis. Night Ministry bears witness to generations of systemic oppression and trauma in the disproportionate numbers of Black people we encounter living on the streets – many of whom are formerly incarcerated. We are called to recommit ourselves as individuals and as an organization to re-examine the ways in which we may contribute to this suffering and what we can do to alleviate it. Saying “Black Lives Matters” is not enough. We have work to do.

HOPE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

As with most Communities of faith, since mid-March, our two Open Cathedral’s came to a halt with the City’s order to “Shelter in Place.” I think most of us at that time never imagined that four weeks later, we would not be able to gather and celebrate the twelfth-year anniversary of our first Open Cathedral – Civic Center on Easter Sunday, or our ninth-year anniversary of Open Cathedral Mission on Cinco de Mayo (May fifth). Yet, we were able to celebrate both, united in spirit and love with the hope, that sooner than later, we will be together once

again worshipping under God’s blue sky.

Once we are able to physically gather again, we will have a lot to celebrate, especially the gift of life and community. At our weekly Open Cathedrals, Tuesday Eve Gatherings, Monday Eve Meditation Group and Open Shabbat, “Community” to us, means “Family.”

This is the beauty and uniqueness of SF Night Ministry and our Programs as we meet people where they are. We treasure, we see and acknowledge the incredible beauty and worth of each human being – our sisters and brothers, our Family.

This summer, we hope to celebrate our first Open Shabbat outdoors as well. SFNM has proactively drafted detailed protocols as to how we envision re-opening and the necessary precautions we will need to take.

Out of a moral obligation for the safety and protection for all who we love and serve, our weekly Monday Meditation Group and Tuesday Eve Gathering will resume in person at a later time since both programs are held indoors at the home of The Faithful Fools. However, thanks, in great part to technology, we were able to quickly transition online and continue to gather via Zoom every Monday and Tuesday at 6:00 P.M.

As most of the world that has had to Shelter in Place, we too, look so very much forward to the time when we will all be together in song, laughter, tears, joy, to hug, to hold one another’s hands as we pray, and perhaps to even meet you at one of our programs – our hearts are always open!

Reflecting upon the future, it reminds me of a quote I read once, “Yesterday is history, Tomorrow is a mystery, Today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present.” And so it is, a present indeed, to be alive and filled with faith, hope and love – Today!



By Rev. Monique Ortiz,
Director of Community Programs

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

TUESDAY GATHERING

Tuesdays 6:00 pm @ Faithful Fools (234 Hyde)

Tuesday Night Gathering is a time of connection, meal, and reflection. We begin with a period of check-ins and food, followed by a deeper dive into a spiritual reading or discussion. Topics range from traditional Bible study to general conversations about faith, hope, love, and life.

Groups volunteer to host the meals. Contact us if your group would like to host a meal. About 12 – 22 people join us each week. Most participants are regular attendees of Open Cathedral. This program is building and sustaining strong relationships among people.

OPEN SHABBAT

Tentative Date: July 17, 2020

Open Shabbat is an emerging program. We hope to have an inaugural service on July 17th, at Civic Center Plaza. This outdoor Jewish service would have a similar form and feel to our successful Open Cathedrals, wherein everyone is invited, welcomed, and included. Rabbi Jeremy Sher and Chaplain/Rabbinical Student Adam Briones are leading the planning. Adam is also one of our Assistant Night Ministers who regularly walks the streets at night. Click here to contribute funds or offer your support for Open Shabbat. You can also text "SHABBAT" to number 44-321.

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

GOODBYE SPRING STUDENTS

Congratulations to our Spring 2020 CPE students! They successfully completed their CPE unit. CPE is intensive spiritual care and formation training in a clinical setting (night ministry, telephones, community programs). SFNM is accredited by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE).

The students were instrumental in helping SFNM launch our expanded telephone Care Line. They have become integral members of our team and beloved members our Night Ministry family.

Interested in CPE? We are accepting applications for 2021. Check the our website for details.

HELLO SUMMER STUDENTS

Please welcome the new summer CPE students. Their training program runs from June 1 - August 13, 2020. Welcome, Dr. Joanna Benskin, Portia Hopkins, Sam Lundquist, and Margot Wagner. Their bios can be found on our website.

www.sfnightministry.org/

or

<https://rb.gy/3lbpeh>

THANK YOU ST. JOHNS LUTHERAN - SUNNYVALE

The San Francisco Night Ministry graciously acknowledges the extremely generous donation received from St. John's Lutheran in Sunnyvale, CA. This gift was mailed and opened by the SF Night Minister – the Rev. Valerie McEntee while on the phone with the Rev. Trent Thornley. They were both wonderfully surprised! St. John's was dissolving their congregation to join with two other congregations. The church renewed their historic ministry with this gift to the Night Ministry. We sincerely thank you now and hope we can recognize the gift further at the annual Fall Harvest in October 2020.



Pictured with Rev. Trent are CPE graduates Shelly Webb, Cecily Knepprath, and Dr. Karma McDonald

OPERATIONS

EVOLUTION IN MINISTRY

I think the first time I heard about Night Ministry was one Sunday morning at St. Peter's Episcopal, maybe 17 or 18 years ago, when Brother Jude Hill showed up in a rather bedraggled condition. I asked him about it, and he said he been up all night walking the streets of San Francisco for Night Ministry.

Now in its 56th year, Night Ministry has been adapting to the new environment of a global pandemic like everyone else. It's not about self-preservation. It's because the need for spiritual care and a listening ear in the lonely hours of the night is ongoing and universal, even while our means of communication and personal contact change.

What makes me hopeful in these troubling times is something I've gotten a glimpse of over the years at Open Cathedral. There I've seen folks living on the margins come together for something more than just their personal spiritual enrichment or a modest meal after the service. They come together for community, under circumstances and in a place where that would seem to be the most difficult thing possible. They come together as a community to care and look out for each other.

And that's the kind of thing I'm hopeful about for us as a society in the midst of this global pandemic. It's terrible that it takes something like this, and it's not something I expected to see in my lifetime; but people – at least when they listen to their better angels – are talking much more about how to preserve and protect the community. We even seen some of that at the national level, at times from people who've spent their careers tearing down government and any sense of collective purpose or responsibility, who all of the sudden regard helping everyone get through this as the country's highest priority.

We're also being forced to rethink our societal values in a way that people haven't thought much about or dared talk about during most of my adult life.

I would add that the murders of George Floyd seems to have brought about a similar reckoning, in which we're not debating whether institutionalized racism exists, but instead are focused on what to do about it.

Do I expect us to emerge from all of this in a better place as a society? That may be wishful thinking, but if we're talking about hope, that's my hope. My hope for Night Ministry is really just a hope for anyone who feels anxious or lonely at night and needs someone to share those feelings with. I hope Night Ministry, or something like it, will continue to be there for those people.

By John Cumming, Esq.
Governing Board President

NIGHT MINISTRY GOVERNING BOARD

John Cumming, President
James Elerick, Vice-President / President-Elect
The Rev. Rebekah Davis, Secretary
Chris Calandro, Treasurer
Larry Dannenberg, Member
The Rev. Rodney Seeger, Member
Megan Rogers, Member
Pam Dannenberg, Member
Mary Van Zomeren, Member



RECRUITING BOARD & STAFF

Night Ministry has open positions on our Governing Board. We especially welcome more Black voices and voices of color in our leadership and ministry staff. We invite more gender and religious diversity as well. If you are passionate about our mission, contact Executive Director Trent Thornley (trent@sfnightministry.org) to learn more about how you might join us in ministry.

SF FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP

Night Ministry gratefully received a total of \$15,000 from the San Francisco Foundation in rapid response grants given during the pandemic.



WAYS TO DONATE

Online:
www.sfnightministry.org
or
<https://rb.gy/d0iulv>

Phone:
888-4-GIVE-30
(or 888-444-8330)

Text:
"4GIVE" to 44-321

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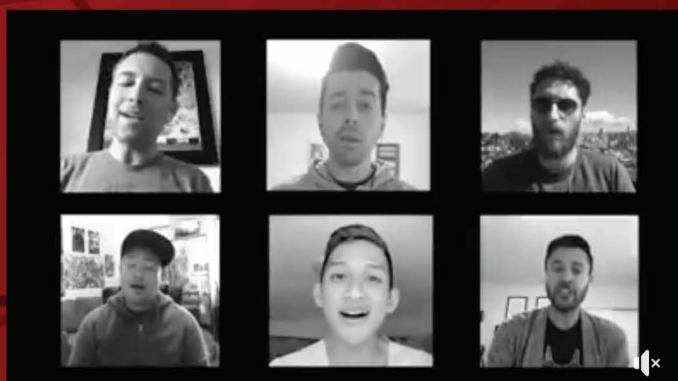
The Fall Harvest Fundraiser will happen online and hopefully in-person this October 2020. Check the website for details. We welcome donations of goods and services to be put up for bids in our online auction. Contact Rev. Trent! After August 1st, you can access the auction online (<https://sfnm.cbo.io>) or by sending this text "sfnm" to number 56-651. You can place bids on items any time once the auction is live.

**THANK YOU TO THE
MANY OTHER CHURCHES,
ORGANIZATIONS, AND
DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED
GRANTS AND DONATIONS
DURING THE PANDEMIC.**

ARE YOU BORED DURING THE PANDEMIC? WATCH NIGHT MINISTRY'S FIRST ZOOM-A- THON!

Watch Night Ministry's first Zoom-A-Thon! Recorded on April 29th, the event is now available for viewing on facebook at rb.gy/fuchtn. This virtual event featured musical and drag performances, as well as interviews with night ministers, volunteers, and staff. Entertaining and charming -- and all for the good cause of supporting SFNM!

A colorful graphic for the Zoom-A-Thon event. It features a central white box with the text 'Zoom-A-Thon' in a large, bold, black font. Above the box is the 'SAN FRANCISCO NIGHT MINISTRY' logo. To the right is a yellow starburst with the text 'Live on Facebook'. Below the main text, it says 'Benefiting SFNM Telephone Care Line' and 'April 29th 5PM - 9PM PST'. At the bottom, there are two images: a vintage television set on the left labeled 'THEN' and a laptop on the right labeled 'NOW', both showing a person speaking.



**Members of the San Francisco Gay Men's
Chorus singing for the Zoom-A-Thon**