

Faith Connections

Supports Faith Communities by . . .

- ◆ Supporting and equipping faith community **leaders** as they seek to welcome and care for those who are living with mental illness.
- ◆ Offering educational, advocacy, and support resources to **individuals** who are living with mental illness.
- ◆ Providing opportunities to connect with **others** who are either living with mental illness or wanting to care for those who are living with mental illness.
- ◆ Providing forums whereby **mental health professionals, mental health consumers, and people of faith** can discuss issues related to faith and mental health.



Please help us connect these various groups who are too often fragmented by the many difficult issues related to living with mental illness.

Faith Connections on Mental Illness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

2016 Annual Conference Sponsors

SUSTAINERS (\$500 or more)

Binkley Baptist Church, Chapel Hill; NAMI Durham; NAMI North Carolina; NAMI Orange County; NC Conference of the United Methodist Church; Shared Visions Foundation; St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Chapel Hill; The Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church, Chapel Hill; University United Methodist Church, Chapel Hill; Watts Street Baptist Church, Durham

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CONTRIBUTORS (\$100 - \$249)

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SPONSORS (up to \$99)

Alliance Behavioral Healthcare; Chapel Hill Friends Meeting Mental Health Group; Club Nova; Our Brother Legion; Pfeiffer Institute *Reach*; Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh; Recovery International; Reimagining Health Collaborative at Duke Divinity

Faith Connections On Mental Illness

Mission Statement

The mission of Faith Connections on Mental Illness is to work with all faith communities to welcome, include, support, educate, and advocate for individuals and families who are living with mental illness.



Meeting 3rd Fridays, 1:00 - 2:30 at

St. Thomas More
940 Carmichael Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

faithconnectionsmentalillness.org

Activities

EDUCATION

In early spring, Faith Connections on Mental Illness (FCOMI) sponsors an annual conference featuring speakers nationally renowned in mental health circles for their work and advocacy. Topics typically include real-life programs that assist those with mental illness; the scientific basis of and treatments for mental illness; and break-out discussion groups. Most presenters have a personal or familial connection to mental illness. Wake AHEC offers optional professional credits for a small additional fee.

FCOMI coordinates “Reading Across Our Faith Communities,” a book group where multiple congregations read/discuss the same book (typically authored by the upcoming Annual Conference keynote speaker).

ADVOCACY

Faith Connections on Mental Illness forms a team (join us!), to participate in NAMIWalks, the annual fundraising and awareness event held mid-spring for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (the nation’s largest mental health non-profit grassroots organization).

FCOMI is one of many sponsors of the annual Legislative Breakfast on Mental Health.

SUPPORT

Our website offers support group and other area resource listings, as well as templates for past programs offered by Connector communities.

Faith Connections on Mental Illness provides scholarships for various activities for mental health causes.

Faith communities and organizations are invited to call upon us for recommendations for speakers for their mental health-related events.

About Faith Connections

Faith Connections on Mental Illness (FCOMI) was officially formed in January 2008 by representatives from three different Chapel Hill faith communities, most of whom were also members of NAMI and had past knowledge and dealings with mental illness in their own families.

This small group united for the specific purpose of seeing how their faith communities could minister to people suffering from mental illness, as well as those who love and care for them.

Out of this initial gathering, an organization was launched!

Group members combined their talents and resources to form a new type of ministry for those caring for or suffering with a mental illness, including (but not limited to) bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, major depression, or anxiety.

Modest yearly panel discussions in 2008 and 2009 evolved into a highly respected annual event attended by approximately 300 clergy, lay leaders, mental health professionals, and individuals.

Monthly meetings with expert guest speakers attract attendees from across the Triangle drawn to the concept that faith communities can offer comfort, help, and hope to those in crisis. The business portion of each meeting includes annual conference planning and communication of mental health-related events, especially in affiliated organizations and faith communities. Meetings are open to all.

Faith Connections on Mental Illness received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization designation in 2014.

FCOMI continues to encourage and support activities in local congregations to carry out the mandate that began at its inception.

Why It Matters

MENTAL ILLNESS is everywhere . . .
. . . *Headlines stream in local media*
. . . *Heartaches scream from our homes*
. . . *Our prisons, streets, and homeless shelters overflow*

1 in 4 adults will experience a mental health disorder in any given year. In other words, almost every single person in any given congregation is touched by the sadness, stigma, lack of emotional and financial support, and barriers to resources engendered by MENTAL ILLNESS.

Faith Connections on Mental Illness refuses to bow to the hopelessness and believes that ignorance is the biggest barrier of all. We invite you to join us in our efforts to increase understanding of mental illness through Education, Advocacy, & Support.

