

## Faith Connections

### Supports Faith Communities by . . .

- ◆ Equipping faith leaders as they seek to welcome and care for those who are affected by mental illness.
- ◆ Offering educational, advocacy, & support resources to individuals living with mental illness.
- ◆ Enabling connections between people living with mental illness and advocates who care for and about them.
- ◆ Providing forums for mental health consumers and professionals, and people of faith to tackle issues related to faith and mental health.



# Faith Connections on Mental Illness

FCMI



Faith Connections  
on Mental Illness  
FCMI

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



**Meetings held at**  
St. Thomas More  
940 Carmichael Street  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

**The 2nd Monday of each Month**  
**3:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

faithconnectionsmentalillness.org  
PO Box 3502, Chapel Hill, NC 27515

## MAKING THE CONNECTION

Faith Connections on Mental Illness (FCMI) was formed in 2008 by representatives from three different Chapel Hill faith communities. Most had past knowledge and dealings with mental illness in their families.

This small group united to see how their faith communities could minister to people affected by 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 living with a mental illness.

By 2010, modest yearly panel discussions had evolved into a highly respected annual event attended by over 200 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. Information is also shared about upcoming mental health-related events, especially in affiliated organizations and faith communities. Meetings are open to all.

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

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

## EDUCATION

FCMI sponsors an annual conference featuring speakers nationally renowned in mental health circles for their work and advocacy. Typical topics include real-life programs that assist those with mental illness and the scientific basis of and treatments for mental illness. Wake AHEC offers optional professional credits for an additional fee.

FCMI 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

FCMI forms a team (join us!) to participate in NAMIWalks, the annual fundraising and awareness event held by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

FCMI routinely hosts or sponsors community outreach events, including the annual NC 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.

FCMI provides scholarships for mental health causes.

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

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. Almost every person in any given congregation is personally touched or knows someone impacted by the sadness, stigma, lack of emotional and financial support, and barriers to resources engendered by mental illness.

FCMI refuses to bow to 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.

