

# SPIRITUAL CARE NOTES

*Providing Spiritual Support to Patients, Family Members, and Staff*

STANFORD HOSPITAL & CLINICS, 300 PASTEUR DRIVE, ROOM HG004, STANFORD, CA 94305

## BLESSINGS BEYOND MEASURE

**By The Rev. Dr. C. George Fitzgerald, S.T.D.**

While contemplating my July 2nd transition to “Retirement Land,” a flashback occurred to a favorite comedian you will readily recognize: Bob Hope and “Thanks for the Memories.” My version will be “Thanks for the Blessings.”

Thanks for the blessings of the Chaplaincy Advisory Council, who from the beginning, back in October 1988, supported the development of a model chaplaincy program. Jeanne Kennedy, then the Director of Community and Patient Relations, assured me it was time to move from Pacific Presbyterian Medical Center in San Francisco to the Stanford Medical Center. Robert Gregg, dean of Stanford Memorial Church, provided further encouragement as we discussed integrating the hospital chaplaincy with the campus-wide vision and practice at Stanford. Half in jest, I informed him my decision to come to Palo Alto was contingent on his promising to remain as dean for at least 10 years (which he did, undoubtedly for more compelling reasons). His successor Scotty McLennan has continued the strong “Mem Chu” support. After Jeanne’s retirement, Barbara Ralston, a cherished colleague, demonstrated her creative and visionary acumen by incorporating Community and Patient Relations within an innovative Guest Services program that included an expanded concierge service, executive health, corporate partners, international medicine — and Spiritual Care.

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From left to right, Landon Bogan, Gretchen Hollingsworth, George Fitzgerald, Susan Scott, John Hester, and Lori Klein



## WHO WE ARE

Stanford Spiritual Care Service serves the spiritual and religious needs of the patients and families who come to Stanford Hospital & Clinics. We are committed to providing compassionate and respectful care and to honoring religious, spiritual, and cultural preferences with dignity.

*Spiritual Care Notes* is designed to keep you abreast of the services we provide as well as new programs and developments.

Your support will help us continue to offer compassion and care to people of all faiths. For your convenience, a return envelope is enclosed.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 650-723-5101, email us at [spiritualcare@stanfordmed.org](mailto:spiritualcare@stanfordmed.org), or visit our website at [stanfordhospital.org/forPatients/patientServices](http://stanfordhospital.org/forPatients/patientServices).



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The Advisory Council morphed into the current CPE Advisory Council consisting of Robinetta Wheeler (Ch.), Landon Bogan, Joshua Fronk, Carolyn Glauz-Todrank, Marita Grudzen, John Hester, Lori Klein, William Masuda, Scotty McClennan, Judith Passaglia, Jan Roberts, Susan Scott and Liza Taft. In my 25+ years, we have trained 300+ students. While enrolled at Stanford Hospital & Clinics they blessed a good many patients, family members and staff by their compassion and commitment. The vast majority have put their training into practice, primarily in congregational, hospital and hospice ministries. Moreover, the future appears even brighter, as Landon Bogan, our CPE director in his first year of tenure with us, produced an outstanding group of residents.

While each of our CPE students has been a blessing for many, I would like to select four whose contributions have been particularly engaging and significant. Eight years ago Susan Scott was selected to serve as our Decedent Care Chaplain. The newly created position may well be the first of its kind in any medical center in the country. If I attempted to share her achievements it would exceed this newsletter. Suffice it to say that she has managed to pull back the cover on the taboo that affects our society of dealing openly with the reality of death. Her thoroughness and sensitivity of care has enabled family and friends experiencing the death of a loved one to find a deeper sense of hope and well-being, as well as enriching the training of our medical residents. Susan is a good writer and quite capable of producing a definitive guide for launching a new specialty within the spiritual care world — and I hope she does. Lori Klein served as a criminal defense and civil rights attorney prior to deciding to replace her legal mantle with being a rabbi and the Cancer Care Chaplain at Stanford. She has produced a model of continuity of care for patients and family members who often feel overwhelmed as they sometimes feel shuttled from one specialty service to



another. She is currently taking the lead in assisting staff colleagues in developing a model for encouraging hope and compassion for family and friends coping with the death of a loved one. The final two CPE graduates whose blessings I wish to share with you are Taqwa Surapati and Kamal Abu Shamsieh, members of the Muslim faith. Until recently, the concept of chaplaincy within Islam hardly existed as a component of providing spiritual care to individuals and families coping with illness. Kamal and Taqwa are in the vanguard of changing that situation, as each is enrolled as a graduate student in the Graduate Theological Union and also plans to pursue certification as an ACPE supervisor. They are already becoming models of pastoral care and are viewed as a blessing within their community.

Then there are the intrepid few who elected to enroll in the advanced training required for being certified as an ACPE supervisor. The list of those who received part or all of their training at Stanford and have proceeded to direct spiritual care departments is truly impressive and inspiring: KiDo Ahn (CPE of Central CA), Birte Beuck (John Muir), John Harrison (El Camino), Tom Harshman (Sequoia), Frank Macht (Dartmouth), Kirsti Mosvold (Oslo), Wilma Reichard (LPCH), Annamae Taubeneck (Palo Alto VA), Sandee Yarlott (LPCH, Alta Bates, and UCLA), Ngan Ling Lung (Florida Hospital), Jurgen Schwing (Kaiser Med. Ctr., Walnut Creek), and Virginia Jackson (VA Palo Alto).

Another source of blessings which surpassed my expectations is our absolutely unique and inspiring volunteers. While having volunteers assist in a chaplaincy service is hardly new or innovative, I suspect there is not another department in the country that can boast of having 230 volunteers that provide such a diversity of faith groups:

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# ADIEU TO A GREAT COLLEAGUE

**By Barbara Ralston, Vice President of International Medical Services, Stanford Hospital & Clinics**

That George Fitzgerald's career at Stanford University Medical Center has matched my own work life timing is not a coincidence, I think. Somebody up there answered my prayers to have a colleague who could help me to understand how to stay centered in balancing the pragmatic business of healthcare with the emotional impact of walking with patients and families who face the reality of fleeting mortality for the first time or for too long a time. Facing mortality requires facing spirituality – and that is intrinsic to our careers, in medicine, as it is for every patient struck by the lightning of a serious diagnosis. How fortunate our patients and our staff at the hospital have been to have a mentor like George to help them approach faith

and spirituality personally and as a part of healing humanity. Under his guidance, the Stanford University Medical Center Spiritual Care Service has become a model for healthcare, and particularly for Academic Medical Centers. Our Education mission is served by the CPE program that graduates international students as chaplains in healthcare institutions and accredits other programs nationwide, as well as by scholarly writings by George and his team. Our Research mission is fulfilled by the evidence base on the power of prayer in healing in which the department participates. Our Care mission is the foundation and serves all patients of all faiths who come to our institution. Community outreach is significant, and George has effectively reached community leaders in creative ways - even by participating as a leader in the Rotary Club.

George has long been a spiritual guide for patients and staff alike. He has the gift of being both an intellectual and a pragmatist. He has the human touch in abundance. George understands pain, frustration, anger, stress, despair, loss of faith and he minimizes none of those. He also understands the gift of life, the value of small comforts, and the importance of how a listening ear and an encouraging word can restore faith.

George understands and knows how to lead to understanding that nothing happens for naught. He can normalize a crisis, with a story, or with humor, and most often with a prayer. He strives to prove the power of the human spirit, mind and heart to heal in a way that does not always mean continued life, but which is peace. George is a remarkable human because he treasures humanity in every form.

I will miss working with the Reverend C. George Fitzgerald and, dear George, I thank you for your friendship and guidance. You always show up at the right time. You have changed the world of care through your work, and helped me try to do the same.

With much gratitude and admiration,  
Barbara ❖



# TRIBUTES TO GEORGE FROM THE SHC STAFF



Who would have believed a conversation on the sidewalks in Honolulu would lead to me becoming the Decedent Care Chaplain at Stanford? I remember you were talking so excitedly about the possibilities for care for patients with two new positions within Spiritual Care – Cancer Care and Decedent Care. I also remember my first day. At the end of New Employee Orientation, I was thinking, “What have I done?” but then I went to see you and you were excited (which was contagious) and helped me get started in what was then a new position. I appreciate your supervision, your support, and your ability to see the bigger picture. Happy retirement!!  
*Rev. Susan Scott, Decedent Care Chaplain*



Dear George, I still remember the first time I met you during my readiness committee for supervisory training. You took an interest in me as a fellow Princeton Seminary graduate, and seemed to know something I did not—that supervisory certification would be a tremendously humbling experience. While I was doubtful at the time, you were right.

Ten years later I met with you to discuss a position for CPE Supervisor at Stanford. We walked over to the Stanford Student Union to mail a package of lemons for your grandkids. We did not take the carefully designed pathways through campus. Instead you charged through an orchard of dirt, oaks and wildflowers, meandering through bushes and over chain fences toward our destination. The way you charged through the orchard has proven consistent with your leadership here at SHC in my year with you. Your continuance is charged with such youthful energy, joy and enthusiasm toward a singular purpose that may not always be apparent to

those around you. Thank you for this refreshing gift, and may you continue to share it freely along whatever path you take from here. *With appreciation, The Rev. Landon M. Bogan, M.Div, ACPE Supervisor*



Thank you, George, for directing us with a deft touch, encouraging each of us to become leaders, so we can provide emotional and spiritual support to everyone we encounter here. You are always looking to better integrate the Spiritual Care Service into the life of the hospital, whether through our goal to make contact with every patient who welcomes spiritual care, or by assisting patients and families with Advance Health Care Directives, hosting medical students from Asia, or supporting hospital staff. You set an international standard for collaborative multi-faith chaplaincy which has deeply inspired me. *Rabbi Lori Klein, Cancer Care Chaplain*



I am Spiritual Care’s current CPE Supervisor-in-Training and have known George since my chaplain residency here in 2004/2005. Like generations of George’s students, I learned to distinguish between “social” and “pastoral” visits from his expert didactics on the art of listening. George himself transcends such categories. I will always remember George’s “Do It Yourself” verbatim exercise, gazing at Rodin’s “Gates of Hell” and Chihuly’s heavenly glass during George’s walking art tour of Stanford, and dancing the waltz together at ACPE conferences. George – I will miss your wise, supportive, and inspiring presence at Stanford, even as your legacy here endures. *Rev. Jen Dillinger, Clinical Pastoral Education, Spiritual Care Service* ❖

# WELCOME TO OUR SUMMER CPE INTERNS

For more than 34 years, Stanford's Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program has helped teach interpersonal and professional skills to theological students and ministers of all faiths. While most hospitals have a chaplaincy, not all are qualified to provide pastoral education, which must meet stringent accreditation guidelines set by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.



## **Benj Fried**

Benj grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area, and is a rising third year student at Hebrew Union College. Before entering the rabbinate, Benj studied Hebrew Bible at Harvard Divinity School where he earned his Master's of Theological Studies. He is currently the Student Rabbi at Congregation Shir Ami in Castro Valley, CA. In his free time, Benj likes to read, play guitar, and watch football.



## **Mary Carter Greene**

Mary is a graduate of CDSP, the Episcopal seminary in Berkeley, with a Master's in Divinity. She serves as the Director of Children, Family and Youth Ministries at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto. Prior to attending divinity school, Mary was a teacher of English to college-aged speakers of other languages. She has traveled widely and has lived across the US, as well as in Germany, France and Turkey. Mary enjoys reading, swimming, running, and spending time with her family and their dog.



## **Dusty Klass**

Dusty received her BA in religious studies from UC Santa Barbara. During her undergraduate studies, she spent a year abroad in Ireland at Trinity College Dublin and wrote a thesis on JUBUs (Jewish-Buddhists). Dusty holds MAs in Hebrew Letters and Jewish Education and will be ordained as a rabbi through Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles in May 2016. Dusty has served a number of Reform Jewish communities, most notably as the student rabbi of Temple B'nai Israel in Amarillo, TX.



## **Jayson Nicholson**

Jayson is currently pursuing his M.Div. at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and is a Chaplain Candidate with the Navy. He received his B.S. in kinesiology from San Diego State University in 2010. During his seminary studies he has spent time focusing on pastoral care in relation to suffering and trauma, specifically in the military context. During his free time he enjoys sailing, being in the sun, and playing sports.



## **Rosemary Othmer Pesko**

Rosemary is a lay Catholic minister with a background in both pastoral ministry and social work. She holds a Master of Arts (MA) in Theology and Pastoral Ministry and a Masters of Social Work (MSW) from Boston College. Her interests include spirituality, mental health, end of life care and mindfulness and meditation. Rosemary recently relocated to the Peninsula with her husband, Matt, who will be starting his medical residency in Psychiatry in July. In Massachusetts, she worked for the Department of Mental Health where she served as the project director for a federal grant aiming to expand mental health care services to young adults.



## **Dr. Feryal Salem**

Feryal is Assistant Professor of Islamic Scriptures and Law, Co-Director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program, and Director of the Imam and Muslim Community leadership certificate program at Hartford Seminary. Her research specializes in early Islamic thought with an emphasis on the foundations of Islamic scripture, hadith methodology, and hermeneutics in classical Islamic texts. She received her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Her dissertation explores the formative period of Sunni Islamic thought as embodied in the foundational role of Ibn al-Mubarak, as well as related topics such as the development of Islamic theology, law, prophetic traditions (hadith) and Sufism as part of the Islamic scholarly tradition.

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Buddhist, Christian (Catholic and Protestant), Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh. When we meet it feels like a United Nations of Spiritual Care. Of course we all know that John Hester has been the force and innovator behind this remarkable program. And the volunteers have blossomed and flourished with the leadership provided by Penny Barrett, Tom Brosnan and many others.

Finally, and this will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with our department, I and countless others have been blessed on a daily basis by Gretchen Hollingsworth and John Hester. Gretchen is the glue that keeps the whole program together and moving forward, while John has an instinct for being available when needed and responding with his seemingly endless and deep compassion. My apologies to those of you I failed to mention — and there are literally hundreds, including a host of generous donors. I opted for the risk of at least trying to identify a representative few. In my heart of hearts, however, my true desire would be to sit down with each of you and say “Thank you so much for the many blessings you have provided, and may God bless you and your loved ones.” ❖

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Isabel Tagle, 2014 Volunteer of the Year

Spiritual Care Service is very proud to announce that one of our volunteers, Isabel Tagle, won the 2014 Volunteer of the Year award from Stanford Hospital & Clinics Volunteer Resources department. Isabel describes her experience as a volunteer at Stanford:

“In 1986, I came to live in Menlo Park because of my teaching work, and I wanted to do some volunteer work as well. I went to visit a Catholic priest I knew in Palo Alto and I asked him, ‘What can I do to volunteer?’

Father Hester was also in the office. Father Hester said ‘I know what you can do!’ I started coming to Stanford Hospital on Sundays because I was working full time. I was trained by a young man who took me around the hospital and showed me what to do.

We discovered that all the volunteers only spoke English, and in the maternity ward many young mothers only spoke Spanish (in those days Stanford volunteers worked in the maternity wards). We needed to help them with questions about their babies, so on Sundays I would spend the whole day with them. I told Father Hester, ‘We need more volunteers who speak Spanish.’ We now have a group of 12 Spanish-speaking volunteers, trained as Spiritual Care volunteers who can use their Spanish-speaking skills. Then they can pray in Spanish with our patients and understand their questions and their needs very well. We are always looking for more bilingual volunteers for the Spiritual Care Service.

Everything we do, it is for the patients. It has helped me a lot to grow, looking at other peoples’ faith, it is unbelievable. To see the patients’ faces when I come to bring Holy Communion, and talk to them, and pray with them, and see how they change, how they find the peace to accept, how they share their faith in life, or in God, or in whatever experience they are having. I am the receiving one, I’m not the one giving, I’m the one receiving all those blessings, so I look forward to coming to Stanford. For me, it’s my gift every week. The people here are so wonderful and I enjoy being in touch with so many other people and other religions as well, the differences make the world so good, it makes you appreciate everything so much more.” ❖



# MEMORIES OF GEORGE

George – It has been an absolute pleasure working with you and to be mentored by you. You are a beacon of light in the midst of darkness and ignorance. Your compassionate, encouraging and passionately supporting nature energized me to pursue global chaplaincy. And, your tireless dedication to including Muslims in spiritual care set an example for the types of goals and aspirations that we should all strive to, build bridges among all people of faith and be available for the vulnerable. Celebrate and Smile! Kamal Abu-Shamsieh



Dear George, It has been nearly 26 years ago that Melanie worked with you and your team in the hospital in her quest to become a Lay Eucharistic Minister. She loved her work at Stanford and helping others was so therapeutic for her as she battled her own physical health. The years we have spent together honoring Melanie's memory through the sponsorship of the Fellowship for a woman in the Pastoral Education Program have been incredibly meaningful. Telling Melanie's story to the wide range of women whom we supported in her name added a positive dimension to my life, kept her memory even more alive for me and, all the while, reminding me of the positive spiritual values that you and she shared. Warmest personal regards, Sam Bronfman



It is a privilege to know and have worked with George Fitzgerald whom I first came to know through my congregation, Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley where George is an Associate Pastor. In 1995 I had the opportunity to participate in a pilot project for Parish Nursing which has in turn led me to a path at Stanford Hospital for nearly 20 years. As a nurse I managed the Parish Nurse program for seven years and coordinated the Partners in Caring Volunteer Caregiving program until 2010. George provided great support and gave me autonomy in creating and managing these programs so that in 2004 the Partners in Caring program received the Community Partnership Award from Stanford University's Office of Public Affairs. What an honor for the Spiritual Care Service and for George's vision to

participate and grow the program. – Candace Mindigo, RN, BSN, Manager Aging Adult Services



Dear George, Shortly after you came to Stanford, I presented you with my thoughts on why we should have a publication to bring the staff of the hospital and the public in on what life-changing things happen in this service. You whole heartedly agreed, and "Chaplaincy Notes" was born! Your direction and inspiration as well as your monthly article kept the work solidly structured and pointedly directed to the growth of chaplaincy. Your graciousness and strength of character will serve you and those fortunate enough to be around you very well. Blessings, Linda A. Byrne



Congratulations George! Before you moved to Stanford we had the delight and challenge of putting together the 1983 International Congress of Pastoral Care and Counseling – people from all over the world who were in pastoral care and counseling attended this congress. Now, here we are 31 years later as co-conveners and coordinators of the Tenth International Congress of Pastoral Care and Counseling, AGAIN in San Francisco! George, I have always admired you. I look forward to the many ways we will continue to work together. Your friend and colleague forever, Rod Seeger



George – Many years ago, we first met after one of your Sunday morning sermons at Memorial Church. It was that special encounter that encouraged me to serve as a volunteer in the Spiritual Care Service. Over 15 years have passed, but I still clearly remember that transforming experience. Best regards, John T. Sakai



In 1993 you opened your educational program at Stanford to me, a foreigner and Norwegian whom you hardly knew, to be trained in supervisory CPE. It meant the world to me. You then contributed to the international connection so wholeheartedly,

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## MEMORIES OF GEORGE, continued from page 7

helping develop the Norwegian CPE into a strong educational movement, now in full reciprocity with the ACPE, and with a high standing in the Norwegian spiritual community. I will remember you, George, as a colleague and supervisor who believed in people like myself, and thus created a wonderful space for learning and growth. Warm regards, Kirsti Mosvold



I am honored to be one of George's students. During my four years as a CPE supervisory student at Stanford from 2006 to 2010, I learned so much from him: his gentleness, patience and wisdom. I was mostly impressed by his flexibility and creativity that helped me overcome so many obstacles I encountered on my CPE journey. George, I am very grateful to you. You are a very special person and an insightful CPE supervisor. Blessings to you as you enjoy your retirement. — Ngan Ling Lung, ACPE Supervisor



I am proud to say that I am the person who hired George many years ago and I have been privileged to have worked with him. He has done an extraordinary job with the Spiritual Care Service. He supported an inter-faith approach from the start. Always aware of the spiritual needs of our patients, he added a

strong Jewish program as well as starting the Muslim spiritual care service. George's retirement is richly deserved! – Jeanne Kennedy, retired Director of Community & Patient Relations at Stanford Hospital



George – You have contributed so much to the world of Spiritual Care and Clinical Pastoral Education, it is hard to imagine not having you there at Stanford. I have been blessed to have gotten to know you as a generous man of spirit, a leader in our field, a compassionate minister, and a kindhearted human being with a disarming sense of humor! – Jurgen Schwing



George – I consistently have been encouraged by your congenial spirit and challenged by your theoretical acumen. I have admired your energy and your passion for learning. You have repeatedly offered your personal and administrative support to numerous CPE satellite programs, and because of you, many, many people have benefited. With great affection and much gratitude, The Rev. Peter Yuichi Clark, Manager of Spiritual Care Services, UCSF