

SPIRITUAL CARE NOTES

Providing Spiritual Support to Patients, Family Members, and Staff

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

CELEBRATING LIFE MODERN MEDICINE MEETS THE POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

By Matthew Goldstein, PhD

Her name was Marta. She was in her 20s with a loving husband and two young kids. Just two short weeks before she had developed a mild cough and a rash on her legs. Over the course of days it progressed into a mysterious, systemic disease affecting small blood vessels all over her body and causing damage to many organs, including her kidneys and lungs.

I had met her several nights before when they wheeled her off the helicopter and into the ICU. She was intubated and sedated and struggled to open her eyes. We explained where she was and discussed our plans of how we would treat her—her squeeze of my hand was the only sign she understood.

In the early hours of the morning her husband, looking lost and scared, arrived in the ICU. He pasted two photos of their children and a small picture of Jesus at the foot of her bed and listened calmly and intently when we explained the critical nature of her condition. When I left that night, he was sleeping in the waiting lounge, stretched across three chairs.

That morning after rounds, a resident came quickly down the hall. He was smiling, and his eyes told me that something exciting was brewing.

“Marta is getting married over in North ICU. They were married in a civil ceremony but the husband called on Spiritual Care and asked if they could be married by a priest, just in case she doesn’t, well, make it.”

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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.

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

If you have any questions, please contact us at 650-723-5101 or visit our website at stanfordhospital.org/forPatients/patientServices.



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ABRAHAM, ISHMAEL, AND ISAAC

By the Rev. Dr. C. George Fitzgerald, S.T.D.

I recently preached a sermon on Abraham at Stanford Memorial Church and could not help but reflect on the fact that he is recognized as the primordial patriarch of three of the world's great religions — Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Moreover, each faith group considers the divine command for Abraham to sacrifice his son as a watershed moment in the life of their founder.

The Christian and Jewish versions are essentially the same: Abraham takes his child Isaac, the son he and his wife, Sarah, had dreamed of for years, up to a mountain to be sacrificed.

The Qur'an presents a slightly different version of the basic story. Abraham's first son is Ishmael, not Isaac, who was born to Hagar, his first wife (who is identified as Sarah's servant in the Christian and Jewish account). So the son that Abraham takes to the site of the sacrifice is actually a young man. Rather than being an obedient and bewildered child as Isaac was, Ishmael is a full adult who sees his dreams vanishing before his eyes but who nevertheless accompanies his father.

Different Interpretations

What is most significant is that both versions of the story share a common conclusion. At the last possible moment an angel intervenes, instructing Abraham to stop—not to sacrifice his son. This is a radical reinterpretation of the understanding of the divine in the history of religion. Essentially the divine nature is not that of a vengeful and angry deity demanding human sacrifice but rather a deity who intercedes with love and compassion at critical moments in our life.

This ancient story serves as a significant model for the members of Spiritual Care Service as we seek to extend compassionate support to patients, family, friends, and staff at Stanford Hospital & Clinics. Rather than devoting attention to the different interpretations that serve to divide us (e.g., Was Hagar a servant or a wife? Was Ishmael or Isaac the true first son of Abraham?), we focus on the greater truth that we joyfully embrace what we have in common.

The divine that we seek to know and serve sustains us and enables us to experience and affirm compassionate care in one another.

Fundamentals in Common

To put it another way, when we allow the main message to be overridden by the distraction of secondary issues, then we might well agree that “the devil is in the details!” Within our group of 230 spiritual care volunteers who represent many of the great global faiths—Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism—we repeatedly experience the joy

of discovering the fundamentals of spirituality we have in common.

The divine that we seek to know and serve sustains us and enables us to experience and affirm compassionate care in one another. Sometimes it feels like we are a bit like a United Nations of Faith. We assist patients and family members to draw upon the rich sources of their own faith tradition, and we find our own faith enriched as well. ❖

The Rev. Dr. C. George Fitzgerald, S.T.D., is the director of the Spiritual Care Service. You can reach him at cfitzgerald@stanfordmed.org.



CELEBRATING LIFE, continued from page 1

The news of this wedding came crashing in on my perception of the smooth, systematic efficiency of ICU patient care. It took a minute to set aside my thoughts about sedation requirements and steroid doses and realize the power and meaning behind this act we were about to witness. I closed my notes, turned off the computer, and walked quickly down the hall to Marta's bedside.

The ceremony was as beautiful a wedding as I have ever seen. Father Hester shared some reflections on the bond of marriage and its special meaning at this time. Just as he was about to speak the pronouncement of husband and wife, Marta raised her hand. She slowly pointed to me, to the holy water, and back to her hands interlocked with her husband's. Father Hester motioned me over and, with my hand in his, guided me in blessing them a second time. Husband and wife. A tear rolled slowly down Marta's face.

The marriage of Marta in the ICU was one of the most meaningful events I've witnessed since I started my clinical training. The hospital is full of medical miracles, and rarely a day passes when we don't participate in the

joy of a birth, the beauty of a successful surgery, or the wonder of a disease healed by medical therapy. It is easy to be captivated by the power of modern medicine as we march forth, day by day, in our battle against illness. Amid all this, we can sometimes forget that it is people we're treating and not just disease.

Amazingly, Marta survived. Her course was long and drawn out, but she left the ICU and eventually the hospital altogether.

Marta taught me a great deal about managing critical illness in the ICU, but more importantly she taught me about the value of the human spirit. For Marta and her husband, the ability to experience the sacrament of marriage was paramount. When patients come to our hospital they arrive both as patients and as people: Marta and her husband taught me that we must treat both. ❖

Matthew Goldstein, MD/PhD Candidate (PhD – Immunology), is in Stanford's Medical Scientist Training Program and will complete his medical degree training in June 2012.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Spiritual Care Week

Questions about Spiritual Care Service? Want to learn more about who we are and what we do? A display table will be set up outside the hospital cafeteria the week of Nov. 7–11. Spiritual Care Service volunteers and staff will be on hand daily from 11 am to 1 pm.

Festival of Lights

Diwali, the Festival of Lights for Hindus and Sikhs, will be celebrated in November in the Hospital Atrium. Mahesh Bhavana, Hindu volunteer, will coordinate. For more information, please call 650-723-5101.

Hanukah Celebrations

Everyone is invited to Hanukah celebrations in the Stanford Hospital Atrium:

- Daily Candle Lighting, Dec. 10, 22–27 at 4 pm.
- Festival of Lights Celebration, Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 4 pm.

Christmas Festivities

Be sure to join us in the Stanford Hospital Atrium for music, songs, and refreshments on Monday, Dec. 19, at 4:30 pm. ❖



NEW ADVANCE DIRECTIVE FORM FOR HOSPITAL

By The Rev. Susan Scott

For several years now, Spiritual Care Service has been responsible for helping patients create their Advance Directive for Health Care. An Advance Directive is a document that specifies what actions should be taken for your health if you are unable to make decisions due

to illness or incapacity. It also appoints a person to make such decisions on your behalf.

In the past several months, we have taken what we have learned from working with patients—what parts seem confusing, what parts need to be explained more, and what parts might be made simpler—and created a Stanford version of the document. The booklet contains frequently asked questions as well as where to find information about other forms that patients use to express their personal desires at the time of illness.

These booklets are available from Spiritual Care Service and Guest Services, and will soon be available in the clinics. We are developing a system to provide set hours each week when volunteers will be available to help with preparing the Advance Directive. You may also request a booklet by e-mailing suscott@stanfordmed.org or by calling 650-723-5101. ❖

The Rev. Susan Scott is the Decedent Care Chaplain at Stanford Hospital & Clinics. You can reach her at suscott@stanfordmed.org.

WHAT'S IN AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

- **Designation of Agent:** You can assign an agent and specify what authority your agent can have
- **Instructions for Health Care:** Your preferences for care, including end-of-life care
- **Organ Donation:** An option to donate
- **Signature:** Two witnesses must observe you sign the document

EID FITR CELEBRATION

Eid Fitr celebrates the renewal of spirit after the month-long fasting of Ramadan. The ninth annual Eid celebration at Stanford Hospital & Clinics was presented by the Muslim Volunteer Group on Sept. 12. The holiday was celebrated with a luncheon, inspirational

talks, slide shows, and displays of artifacts. Eid day begins with a communal prayer in the morning, and Muslims all over the world share their thankfulness by getting together with friends and family. ❖



WELCOME TO OUR NEW CPE RESIDENTS

For more than 20 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.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics welcomes the CPE Class of 2011.



Carol Dolezal-Ng
Presbyterian (USA)

Carol completed service in early 2011 with the Presbyterian Church (USA). She served as a Mission co-worker at the Synod of Lebanon

and Syria, serving the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon. Carol's interests include writing and storytelling, music, photography, and she has traveled throughout the Middle East, Costa Rica, Europe and the U.S. Originally from Iowa, Carol resides in Alameda and has two 13-year-old twins, Grace and Jeremy.
cdolezal@stanfordmed.org



Kimberly Scott
Episcopalian

Kimberly will receive her Master of Divinity in May 2012 from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. She is a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oakland and Episcopal Relief and Development, the worldwide relief agency of the Episcopal Church. Kimberly enjoys photography and cooking with the produce from her garden.

kiscott@stanfordmed.org



Annamae Taubeneck
Presbyterian (USA)

Annamae is a veteran of the U.S. Army, where she served as a helicopter mechanic and crew chief, and a veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy. She earned a Master of Divinity from San Francisco Theological Seminary and is certified ready for ordination by the Presbytery of San Francisco. Annamae has completed CPE training at Stanford Hospital and at the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System in Palo Alto. She has a son, Teddy, 11, and a daughter, Grace, 8.

ataubeneck@stanfordmed.org



The Rev. Mark Kliever
Presbyterian

An ordained Presbyterian pastor, Mark comes to Stanford from Southern California after serving in interim ministries for congregations.

Mark is a certified Life Coach with the International Coaching Federation and coaches in the area of life transitions. He has two children, Jonathan and Avonley. Mark enjoys cycling and horseback riding.
mkliever@stanfordmed.org



The Rev. George Matthews
Christian

A Palo Alto native, George worked for Varian Associates and Hewlett-Packard for a number of years in a variety of positions. He received his

ordination from the Church of God in Christ in 2000. He is the founding pastor of Genesis Worship Center in Oakland for the past eight years and is currently pursuing his Master of Divinity at Liberty University. George enjoys spending time with his two sons Caleb, 15, and Joshua, 11.

Gmatthews@stanfordmed.org



Melissa Thomson
Unitarian

A recent graduate of Pacific School of Religion, Melissa is a candidate in the Unitarian Universalist ministerial fellowship process and a member of the UU Church of Palo Alto. She enjoys reading, knitting, and running. Melissa and her spouse, Elliot, are parents of two daughters, Clare and Alexia.

mthomson@stanfordmed.org

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Spiritual Care volunteers attend five weekly training sessions in October and November. Then they complete three mentoring sessions with an experienced Spiritual Care volunteer. They then may volunteer in the hospital with our patients. The next round of volunteer training sessions will begin in spring 2012.

HOUSING FOR RESIDENTS

If you have an extra room in your home, please consider hosting a Clinical Pastoral Education resident while he or she trains at Stanford. Any length of time is appreciated. For more information, please call 650-723-5101.

LEADERSHIP

Development Committee

George Fitzgerald
Marge Hildahl
Anadel Law

CPE Professional Advisory Group

Will Masuda (Chair)	Lori Klein
Linda Bracken	Scott McLennan
George Fitzgerald	Judy Passaglia
Carolyn Glauz-Todrank	Barbara Ralston
Marita Grudzen	Jan Roberts
John Harrison	Susan Scott
John Hester	Liza Taft
	Robinetta Wheeler

Volunteer Coordinating Committee

Tom Brosnan (Chair)	John Hester
Brenda Avery	Sherifa Ibrahim
Penny Barrett	Tom Jackson
Mahesh Bhavana	Lori Klein
Bruce Feldstein	Susan Scott
George Fitzgerald	Kathryn Stucki
Don Gee	Taqwa Surapati
	Isabel Tagle

GIVING THE GIFT OF TIME

From visiting patients to offering support to families and assisting with behind-the-scenes activities, Spiritual Care Service volunteers serve an important and meaningful role in the busy units of Stanford Hospital & Clinics. They come from all major faiths and help people from all denominations. Here are just three of our dedicated volunteers.

Madison Valentine

After-school Commitment



Madison Valentine learned about the Spiritual Care Service after talking to the Rev. Susan Scott at First Lutheran Church in Palo Alto. The 16-year-old Palo Alto High School sophomore knew right away that she wanted to participate. She finished her auxiliary volunteer training in June and started out working in the Spiritual Care Service offices one afternoon a week, filing papers, making photocopies, and organizing paperwork.

“I really enjoy working with the people in Spiritual Care and learning how much goes into taking care of the patients in the hospital,” she says. “It’s such a wonderful experience coming here and being part of such a wonderful staff.”

Madison manages to stay busy with lots of schoolwork and activities. She’s been a volunteer at her church food closet for the past two years, and she works on a committee for her church council. She is also a member of the Palo Alto Fire Explorers, a program that introduces young people to emergency medicine and fire science.

“If you’re in a situation where someone’s hurt, you can help,” says Madison, who hopes to continue her training to become an EMT after high school.

She makes it a priority to find the time to volunteer and considers it an honor to be a part of helping people. “The most rewarding part of being a volunteer is working with the very kind people here and getting to know a little bit more about how the hospital works.”

VOLUNTEERS MAKE A BIG IMPACT

In 2011, 221 Spiritual Care Service volunteers gave close to 11,500 hours of their time and offered almost 11,000 communions to hospital patients and families. Together they provided 27,791 patient visits. We wish to thank all our volunteers but extend a special recognition to our longest-term participants:

Cheryl Hewitt

Returning the Favor



Cheryl Hewitt has been a patient at Stanford over the years and decided it was time to return the favor.

“I like to give back because I need so much physical help to maintain my lifestyle,” says Hewitt, who has cerebral palsy. “People have helped me, so there’s no

reason why I can’t help someone else.”

As a Spiritual Care Service volunteer, Cheryl helps distribute information pamphlets for patients and families in coronary care and the intensive care units. She soon plans to assist families in the North Intensive Care Unit waiting area.

A Michigan native, Cheryl received her master’s degree in social work and worked at Detroit Receiving Hospital and the Rehab Institute of Michigan. She moved to California, helping veterans find service-connected resources at the Palo Alto VA.

She also works at the Silicon Valley Center for Independent Living, a nonprofit organization that provides support and tools to allow disabled people to live independently.

“I’m a very independent person,” she says. “Even though people look at me and think I’m severely disabled, the only thing that doesn’t work on me is my body.”

Mickey Martin started 1980
Jeanne Placonestarted 1987
Susan Flax..... started 1990
Isabel Tagle started 1992

Marlene Hunter

Sharing a Ritual



There are mornings when Marlene Hunter wakes up and thinks she would rather stay home and work in her Menlo Park garden rather than drive over to the hospital for her biweekly afternoons as a Spiritual Care Service volunteer. “But by the time I get here, I’m always glad I came,” says

the 77-year-old grandmother of nine. “I like to help the patients and they help me so much as well.”

Marlene has been a volunteer for almost five years, visiting with Catholic patients and offering communion with a simple prayer. Married for 55 years, she said she realized how important this ritual was to patients when her husband was hospitalized for several months and told her how meaningful taking communion was to him during that time. “His experience made me realize I was really doing something worthwhile,” she says.

No stranger to a medical setting, Marlene worked in a lipoprotein research lab at Stanford Medical School for 23 years and had been involved in clinical work before that. After she retired, she noticed a call for Spiritual Care Service volunteers in her church bulletin.

She has learned to make no assumptions about patients and to infer what people need when she stops in for a visit. She recalls dropping by on a teenage boy and his friends one day, wondering what she would say to break the ice. “They were so humble and appreciative,” she remembers. “It was a real treat to be with them.” ❖

♻️ Printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink.

CHOOSING OUR ‘SECOND CHANCE’

By Rabbi Lori Klein

When my patients are first diagnosed with a serious illness, they may face urgent questions about treatment plans, finances, informing loved ones, or arranging for the care of their dependent children or elders. After that initial flurry of tasks and decision making, some of them settle into a poignant question about the future: If I can be healed or can live with this illness for a time, what will I do with my “second chance” at life?

Sudden illness can provide startling clarity and can highlight something about one’s life that is deeply unsatisfying. For one patient, it may be too much effort at work and too little time spent with loved ones. Another patient may regret not setting aside time to paint. Another may lament too much time spent in anger and too little in gratitude.

Amazing transformation can come with that clarity about missed opportunities and second chances. One man vowed to me that he was no longer willing to try to live up to societal expectations that he spend hours every fall and winter watching football games,

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then discussing them the next day at the office. A mother spoke to her estranged daughter for the first time in years. A family decided to live with a reduced income so the patient could become a more active parent.

It is rarely too late to heal relationships—those are transformations that can occur even in the midst of grave illness. On the other hand, second chances at a more fulfilling career, an artistic adventure, or travel can become unlikely if we let too many opportunities pass by.

Whether you are currently living with an illness or not, you can look for your second chance now. Sit quietly and listen for the still, small voice that helps you discern when you should seek to alter your path through life.

How often does another chance come for change? With every breath. With every breath. With every breath. ❖

Rabbi Lori Klein is Stanford Hospital’s Cancer Care Chaplain.
You can reach her at lklein@stanfordmed.org.