

# Praise for H&CC's SPIRITUAL CARE PROGRAM



*"It's been a year ago that you began to introduce Spiritual Care concepts and practices to the clients and staff at the Consortium. What an important and bold endeavor that has been! Congratulations on your one-year anniversary! You have successfully implemented spiritual care into the services offered to the clients and staff at the Consortium. By doing so, you have enriched the lives of the clients and staff. Moreover, you have recognized that the core human dimension of making meaning, connecting with something bigger than ourselves and celebrating life's sacredness are indeed fundamental to the quality of life of your clients. Throughout the past 12 months you have identified and responded to the spiritual and religious needs of your clients by making connections to local religious communities, by providing counsel during times of struggle, and by celebrating milestones adding the sacred dimension of life cycle events. You have supported clients and staff during times of illness and grief by offering spiritual presence, encouragement and listening presence. Witnessing your work and your progress has been a privilege for me. I have been impressed by your collaborative spirit and by your tenacity to advocate for your clients' spiritual and religious needs. Thank you for your wonderful, deeply meaningful and important work that enhances the lives of your clients and colleagues at the Consortium. Congratulations! May you continue to be blessed with a sense of hope and commitment to the people you care for. With Gratitude,"*

**~Rev. Ute Schmidt, Spiritual Care Department, Baystate Medical Center**

*"You, the members of the Western Massachusetts Training Consortium family, should feel proud of your work to serve people as whole human beings - that is: physical, emotional and spiritual services (body, soul and spirit). You are one year into this journey and that is cause for a pause to celebrate! Celebrate the personal joys of the people you support, celebrate the opportunities for spiritual growth that are present! Celebrate the reality of the impact that whole person services have during times of loss. Celebrate the friendships and connections that are developing as the people you support are able to explore faith and spirituality in a nurturing environment. And, pause to celebrate the ministry and work of Rev. Gregory Jones as he seeks to listen deeply to the faith journeys of the people you serve. Pause, celebrate and then continue with renewed vigor to serve people differently as whole human beings - body, soul and spirit. The Heritage Christian Services family is proud to walk with you through this journey."*

**~Lida Merrill, Director of Spiritual Life, Heritage Christian Services, Inc.**

*“Rev. Gregory Jones is providing spiritual supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in some of the most important areas where they are needed: helping people get reconnected to a faith community of their tradition and preference, ministering to both people with disabilities and staff members following the death or loss of a person being served or a staff person, and helping people fulfill some long time dreams of doing something they have always wanted to do. Those are all key roles in helping build quality of life and real experiences of belonging and inclusion in communities, ones too often overlooked in community-based services. It’s a great beginning.”*

**~Bill Gaventa, M.Div., Summer Institute on Theology and Disability**

*“The spiritual coordinating at Western Mass Training Consortium is a great thing. I have seen personally how it helps our individuals.”*

**~Joann McCallum, Lead Staff, Home & Community Connections**

*“When the position of Spiritual Care Coordinator was discussed I thought, “Hmmm what is this all about?” I wondered how this could be beneficial and if it was needed. I always think...So, I went straight to the source and asked Rev. Greg about his duties and mission. What an exciting idea, to begin to assist and guide the individuals to their religion, their spirituality (what is that?), to give them a person to trust, to communicate fears, desires and dreams to...huge!! Many of us on the management team met with Rev. Greg, along with the individuals we support, to build a foundation with them and create a confidential and trusting atmosphere. As time passed, Rev. Greg took the ball and ran. He made several contacts with different religious groups, set times to meet with people and reestablished lost connections in churches and synagogues. Other areas which have had a great impact upon Home and Community Connections are his willingness and wanting to be available in crisis and hospital situations. While the people we support age, have illnesses, and are hospitalized, Rev. Greg goes in and works his magic. He rode alongside the ambulance, sat many hours at bedsides and used his “credentials” on several occasions. I have developed a deeper respect for him as I watch the empathy and compassion flow from him during these difficult times. For me the impact Rev. Greg has had on the individuals supported doesn’t just surround going to churches, it goes deeper. He truly cares, has compassion and is dedicated to being there for all in our company. Congratulation on the year Anniversary of the Spiritual Care Program.”*

**~Tracy McCarthy, Senior Residential Manager, H&CC**

*“I would like to take a minute to say thank you to Rev. Gregory Jones. He has been, in these several months, such a great, instrumental help with providing wonderful spiritual guidance to the individuals we support at the Consortium. Gregory has done an excellent job with keeping all lines of communication open when the individuals would like to speak about any issues they are facing, along with creating a comfortable safe atmosphere as well. I am deeply honored to be working with such a wonderful, exceptional coworker.”*

**~Chrystal Dore, Residential Coordinator, Home & Community Connections**