

# Healthy Communities



A publication for people who care about improving the health of our community

Spring 2017

## A Note from the Director



W. Daniel Hale, Ph.D.  
Director, Healthy  
Community Partnership

Over the past six months, the Healthy Community Partnership has been forging new relationships and strengthening partnerships that will allow us to extend our reach into the community. Some of these efforts are highlighted in this issue of *Healthy Communities*; however, I wanted to bring to your attention our most recent developments—a partnership with the Mary Harvin Transformation Center and the addition of a community chaplain to Johns Hopkins' spiritual care and chaplaincy team.

### Mary Harvin Transformation Center

In addition to the Healthy Community Partnership's offices on the Johns Hopkins Bayview campus, we now have satellite offices and classroom space in the Mary Harvin Transformation Center. Located at 1600 N. Chester Street and just a mile north of The Johns Hopkins Hospital, the center is largely dedicated to affordable apartments for seniors. You may remember hearing about this building—under construction at the time—being completely destroyed by a fire during the unrest in April 2015. Southern Baptist Church's pastor, **Rev. Donte Hickman**, and others involved in the development of this center, refused to be discouraged and made a commitment to rebuild. Exactly one year later, the Mary Harvin Transformation Center opened. We are thrilled to be a part of the Mary Harvin Center and look forward to continuing our relationship with Southern Baptist.

### New Community Chaplain

The Johns Hopkins Health System's Department of Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy announced the appointment of **Rev. Christopher Brown** (*right*) as the director of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and community chaplaincy. This is a newly created position, which represents the department's commitment to serve beyond the walls of the hospital.

Rev. Brown has established himself as a leader in pastoral education through his prior experience as the coordinator for CPE at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and as manager of Johns Hopkins' CPE program. In his new role at Johns Hopkins, Rev. Brown will take his talent and energy out into the community and work closely with local clergy. One of his programs, *Caring for the City*, is highlighted in this newsletter.

As always, I invite you to connect with us either by way of partnership or by providing feedback on how we can better serve you—our partners in care.

In faith and good health,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dan".



Rev. Christopher Brown

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# RECAP: 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WILLIAM S. PERPER SYMPOSIUM

On November 2, 2016 more than 200 family caregivers, health professionals, faith leaders and community members gathered for the 5th Annual William S. Perper Symposium. The theme, “Faith in Action: Caregiving in the Community,” celebrated the power of family caregiving and helped participants understand the role of spirituality in caring for loved ones.



During the morning session, clergy leaders (*pictured at left*) spoke about their sacred scriptures and faith traditions. Speakers were **Rabbi Dana Saroken**, Beth-El Congregation; **Bishop Denis Madden**, Archdiocese of Baltimore; **Rev. Donte Hickman, Sr.**, Southern Baptist Church; **Imam Hassan A. Amin**, Muslim Social Services Agency; **Rev. Paula Teague**, Department of Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy, Johns Hopkins Health System; and **Rev. Gregory Johnson**, Senior Advisor for Family Caregiving, EmblemHealth.

In addition to learning about faith and caregiving, conference participants obtained the latest information about caregiving programs and health-related services from 25 government, community, social service and health care agencies. These partners work in collaboration with Called to Care to provide family caregivers with the resources they need to take care of themselves and their loved ones.

Overall, the symposium received rave reviews. In an evaluation, one attendee commented, “Excellent presentations. Extraordinary speakers. A wealth of information. Very well-organized. This event was truly faith in action.”

Another said, “The symposium is nothing short of eye opening. The basics of loving each other, caregiving and helping the needy are what life is about.”

## SPOTLIGHT: SOUL CENTER AT BETH EL CONGREGATION

Imagine a center that focuses on mindfulness, healing, rejuvenation and growth—all within the context of your religious faith. A place where you can come for workshops, seminars, support groups, or simply to meet and connect with others who are facing some of life’s physical, emotional or spiritual challenges.

That’s exactly what **Rabbi Dana Saroken**, associate rabbi of Beth El Congregation, envisioned a few years ago after talking with numerous members of the Jewish community. In late 2016, she saw her vision come to life when the Alvin and Lois Lapidus Center for Healing and Spirituality—also known as the “Soul Center”—officially opened at the Beth El Congregation in Pikesville.

This innovative faith-based center offers a wide array of programs. Regular meditation gatherings “allow you to step out of the busyness of your life and experience the benefits of being present in the moment and free of self-judgment.” The center also offers weekly creative arts hours and yoga classes that begin with 10 minutes of inspirational Torah. Each month, Rabbi Saroken leads a prayer circle/healing service, and there is a Caregiver Cafe co-sponsored by Jewish Community Services and Johns Hopkins Bayview.



*The Soul Center is open to all faiths and provides a calming environment for people to pray, heal and learn.*

### *Spotlight: Soul Center at Beth El Congregation (cont'd.)*

Programs also extend beyond the Soul Center and into the community. Rabbi Saroken recently led a Teshuva Walk (a combination study/walking excursion) around Lake Roland. Other activities have included in-home cooking class dinner parties focused on forgiveness and gratitude, and an iPhone photography class to help people see the world through a different lens.

“Everything we do has a soulful twist,” says Rabbi Saroken. “Our intention is to bring spirituality and a sense of awe, wonder and connection into people’s lives. Our goal is to transform lives!”

For more information about the Soul Center, visit [soulcenterbaltimore.org](http://soulcenterbaltimore.org).

To learn more about Beth El Congregation, go to [bethelbalto.com](http://bethelbalto.com).



*Rabbi Saroken was a keynote speaker at the William S. Perper Symposium in 2016.*

## CARING FOR THE CITY



*The first graduating class of Caring for the City.*

Following Baltimore’s unrest in the spring of 2015, there has been an increased need to address the emotional needs of the community. Recognizing this, the Healthy Community Partnership and Johns Hopkins’ Department of Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy launched *Caring for the City*, a program for local clergy to learn how to respond to the needs of their congregation and community.

The first cohort consisted of 12 clergy from churches in Northeast, East and West Baltimore. They met every week for 2.5 hours at the Mary Harvin Transformation Center at Southern Baptist Church. Each class covered a specific topic, such as the art of pastoral conversation, health and wellness in spiritual conversations, end-of-life care, and care in the

midst of addiction and mental health issues. Clergy also were offered tours of The Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins Bayview, and invited to become spiritual care volunteers. In addition to a formal agenda, the six-week course gave clergy an opportunity to share stories and ideas, and offer each other support.

The first *Caring for the City* course received overwhelmingly positive feedback. One pastor expressed his gratitude for the course—he now had new resources to help with the trauma experienced in his congregation. Another participant talked about the strength of the cohort and how the group pulled together to help her address specific needs in her congregation. Finally, one clergy member shared that the weekly classes not only improved her care for her congregants, but it had changed her relationships with her family, too.

If you are interested in joining the next cohort of *Caring for the City*, call **410-550-1197** or email [afitz@jhmi.edu](mailto:afitz@jhmi.edu).



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## Lay Health Educator Program

*A free, 10-week program for leaders and members of faith communities led by Johns Hopkins Bayview physicians, psychologists, nurses, social workers and chaplains.*

*Participants receive training, materials, access to resources and ongoing support that enable them to organize meaningful programs on important health matters for their congregations and communities.*

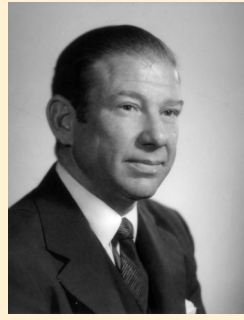
**September 7 through November 16**

Thursdays, 5 to 7 p.m.

Johns Hopkins Bayview campus

Space is limited, so register today!

**Info./Register:** 410-550-1118 or [kmonson1@jhmi.edu](mailto:kmonson1@jhmi.edu).



## 6th Annual William S. Perper Symposium

*This free conference provides a forum for community members, faith leaders and mental health providers to connect with each other and learn about the connection between faith and mental health.*

**Friday, October 27**

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church  
7 West 55th Street, New York, NY

**More details to come.**

