

**Spring has sprung !** Spring symbolizes the beginning of a new year.

A team of volunteers of the Working Group has been working relentlessly over the winter. Finally, we are proud to announce our website is LIVE.

## **Working Group Website**

<http://www.mentalhealthandfaith.org/>

Our website aims to share faith-based resources for individuals, families and friends impacted by mental illness. We maintain a list of Christian-based support groups on our website across GTA.

<http://www.mentalhealthandfaith.org/community-partners/faith-based-support-groups/>

We also maintain a list of Christian-based counseling services and treatment centres.

<http://www.mentalhealthandfaith.org/community-partners/faith-based-treatment/>

If you do not find your group listed on our website, please feel free to contact us at

[info@mentalhealthandfaith.org](mailto:info@mentalhealthandfaith.org)

We have also collected some articles related to mental health of clergy and the statements made by various denominations.

<http://www.mentalhealthandfaith.org/resources/for-clergy-and-ministers/>

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium : Equipping Faith Leaders to Respond to Mental Health Challenges, Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup>**

In a recent research report conducted by Lifeway Research “Study of acute mental illness and Christian Faith”, (available at : <http://www.lifewayresearch.com/files/2014/09/Acute-Mental-Illness-and-Christian-Faith-Research-Report-1.pdf>) results indicate:

-questions of suffering are common among family suffering from the impact of acute mental illnesses including major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia

-23% of pastors indicate they have personally struggled with mental illness of some kind

-65% of family members in a household of someone with acute mental illness believe local churches should do more in talking about mental illness openly as that the topic should not be a taboo

-49% of pastors rarely or never speak to their church in sermons or large group messages about acute mental illness

-the response of people in church to individuals' mental illness caused 18% to break ties with a church and 5% to fail to find a church to attend

-Individuals, families, churches and pastors all need clarity on (i) the basics of mental illness, (ii) signs of what to look for, (iii) knowing how to respond if they suspect someone has a mental illness and (iv) ways to be supportive without being overwhelmed

To respond to the calling of education and training among faith leaders, the Working Group is hosting the second symposium on **Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015** focusing on training to faith leaders so they can respond to the need. In this one day training:

Keynote speaker, [Craig Renneholm](#) will provide training on how to start mental health work in a faith community.

[Victor Shepherd](#) will address the theology of suffering in the context of mental illness.

[Dr Mary Lynn Dell](#), an ordained clergy and psychiatrist, will address mental health of clergy.

[Dr John Peteet](#), Chair of the Caucus on Spirituality, Religion and Psychiatry of the American Psychiatric Association, will discuss the myths and facts of depression and mental illness.

[Mark Biddle](#) and [Nancy Kehoe](#) will address mental health and faith.

We hope to see you on Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup> so we can connect and respond to the mental health challenges together.

Working Group for the Promotion of Mental Health in the Faith Communities