

CONNECTIONS

TOOL BOX

Mental health

With Mental Illness Awareness Week scheduled for Oct. 7–13, this is an especially good month for congregations to highlight mental health issues. Several excellent resources are listed on page 24. Here are additional sources of tools and support:

» **Reaching out to returning war veterans**—*The Wounds of War: The Church as a Healing Community*, a resource packet designed to help congregations minister to soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with physical, emotional and spiritual wounds, including major depression and posttraumatic stress disorder. To download the packet: www.pcusa.org/resource/2010-disability-inclusion-resource-packet

» **Mental health resources for ministers and other church professionals** enrolled in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions medical plan: (866) 640-2772; www.cignabehavioral.com

» **“Churches and the Mentally III”**—An eight-minute story that aired June 22 on the PBS program *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*: www.pbs.org/religionandethics (select “Episodes/by date”)

» **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**—the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. To learn more and find a local affiliate in your area: www.nami.org

» **NAMI FaithNet**—NAMI outreach to religious organizations; a national expansion of the vision of PC(USA) member Gunnar Christiansen, founder of FaithNet of NAMI—California (see pages 17–18), promoting education and advocacy

within communities of faith:

www.nami.org/faithnet

» **American Association of Pastoral Counselors**—an organization that represents and sets professional standards for more than 2,000 pastoral counselors, with the mission of providing spiritually informed and integrated counseling, collaborative community-based services, and training and education to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, communities and congregations. To learn more or find a counselor: www.aapc.org

» **National Training Initiative (NTI)**—developed by Pathways to Promise and the American Association of Pastoral Counselors to organize and train neighborhood clusters of congregations and other community partners on mental health and substance abuse. To learn more or find out how to participate: www.pathways2promise.org/nti.htm; or contact Douglas M. Ronsheim, (703) 385-6967, doug@aapc.org

» **National Association for Children of Alcoholics**—an organization with a broad-ranging faith initiative offering resources for pastors and other faith leaders: www.nacoa.org (select “Clergy”)

» **Samaritan Institute**—a program with offices in 336 U.S. cities serving the mental, emotional and spiritual needs of children, adults, families, couples and organizations to restore health and promote growth. To learn more: www.samaritaninstitute.org

» **Mental Health Ministries**—a source of educational resources to help erase the stigma of mental illness and help congregations care for people living with mental illness and for their families. To learn more: www.mentalhealthministries.net