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11/16/11



FaithWorks mental health forum to cover trio of topics

By Noreen Lewis Cochran
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Robert Certain



Nearly a week after Veterans Day, military personnel will continue to be the topic of discussion Thursday at the third annual mental health conference held by the Vinings-based nonprofit FaithWorks.

An hour will be devoted to an address by the Rev. Robert Certain, a decorated combat aviator who flew 100 missions in the Vietnam War before being shot down in 1972, according to his biography.

"Certain will discuss faith communities as first responders to veterans' mental health needs," nonprofit founder and psychiatrist Branko Radulovacki, M.D. said in a statement about the current rector of St. Peter and St. Paul Episcopal Church in Marietta.

A former U.S. Air Force Reserves chaplain, Certain currently serves on the Department of Defense's committees on mental health and medical ethics and on its task force for suicide prevention.

"He will highlight growing needs among post-war veterans and their families and identify critical sources of support," Radulovacki said.

Radulovacki will give the welcome to clergy, mental health professionals, community leaders and the public, introducing them to or reacquainting them with the 3-year-old nonprofit.

"FaithWorks is a grassroots initiative to galvanize Atlanta's faith leaders and their respective communities to help those with mental and addictive illness," he said. "The goal of this conference is to heighten awareness of mental and addictive illness, highlight research showing patients' faith lives can profoundly affect their response to treatment and educate participants about currently available resources."

The keynote speaker will be psychiatrist Harold Koenig, M.D., director of the Duke

University Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health in Durham, N.C. His topic will be integrating spirituality into patient care and psychotherapy.

"Many people, especially in the Southeast, are religious and highly value the spiritual aspects of life," Koenig said in a statement. "Spirituality holds the promise of protecting people from mental health problems, or at least helping them to cope with them and possibly influencing their remission."

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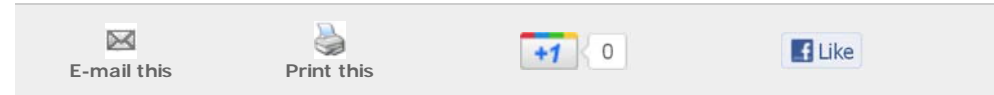
Roswell psychiatrist Michael Lyles, M.D., who completed his residency at Duke, will present an update on new medications for major depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Lyles' clinical experience includes prison and state hospital psychiatry, community mental health care, teaching hospital consultation and underserved populations.

"Our speakers are leading the way in responding to the needs of those with mental illness and addictive disease with compassion and a sense of urgency," Radulovacki said.

If you go

- **What:** FaithWorks Mental Health Conference
- **When:** Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Where:** Trinity Presbyterian Church, 3003 Howell Mill Road, Buckhead
- **Cost:** \$40 for four continuing education credits, \$25 for general public
- **Information:** www.FaithWorksGa.com or email radulovackimd@att.net



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