



MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

Linking Lives for Health and Wholeness



UCC Wellness Ministries Newsletter

May 2023, Volume 8, Issue 5

REFLECTION:

Severe weather impact:



In March 2023, deadly tornados ripped through Mississippi and Alabama. On March 24th twenty tornados touched down in the two states. The town of Rolling Fork, MS was severely damaged. One week later, on March 31st, severe thunderstorms again tore through the U.S. Midwest and Mid-South . These storms spawned dozens of tornadoes across seven states. The town of Wynne, Arkansas was especially hard-hit. In the wake of these storms, lives were lost, downed trees interrupted electrical power, and some towns were almost completely destroyed.

Caring responses have begun through national and regional organizations. Varieties of aid and assistance are needed. People in these communities express hope for rebuilding and restoring their daily lives, even as they are surrounded by destruction. The [UCC Disaster Ministries](#) provide physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual care to those affected by disasters and respond through a network of [Conference Disaster Coordinators](#). Check with your Conference Coordinator for current response work and support.

A TIMELY HEALTH TIP

Ticks: the 2023 tick season is already underway.



A [comprehensive overview](#) about ticks offers information about identifying types of ticks, preventing tick bites, signs and symptoms of the five tickborne diseases, how to remove ticks, and surveillance of tick borne breakouts.

[Lyme disease](#) is often reported as a the most common disease spread by ticks. This source provides information on symptoms, tick removal, treatment, and educational materials.

[Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever](#) can be caused by several different types of ticks. Cases occur throughout the United States, but are most commonly reported from North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

It is important to be aware of another tick-borne illness – **babesiosis**. The CDC has reported an increase in the number of reported cases of babesiosis with most reported in the Northeast and the upper Midwestern states of the U.S. The [Mayo Clinic](#) has an overview of babesiosis and what you need to know about this year's tick season.

WELLNESS MINISTRIES FOCUS

Recognizing Ministries Among Us. Health and wellness have been a significant consideration and focus within and beyond our congregations for the past three years. Acknowledging these challenges, UCC Wellness Ministries would like to recognize congregations that responded with actions or activities that promoted spiritual, mental, and physical wellness. For more information and an easy application form send an E-mail to WellnessMinistries@UCC.org.

Deadline for submission is May 31st. Awardees will be announced on June 30th.

LINKS TO THIS MONTH'S NATIONAL HEALTH-RELATED TOPICS

Follow these links to find information you can use for worship bulletin inserts, bulletin board displays, and newsletter articles.

For the Month of May:



Mental Health Awareness Month: The United Church of Christ is offering a webinar conversation on **Wednesday, May 3rd at 12 noon ET** about youth mental health and how it intersects with [Our Whole Lives](#). The webinar, "[OWL Taking Flight: Mental Health Awareness While Offering Our Whole Lives](#)," will include panelists the Rev. Sarah Lund, UCC minister for mental health and disabilities, and Jennica Davis-Hockett, youth ministry specialist for the Unitarian Universalist Association. [Registration is open](#) for the webinar.

The [UCC Mental Health Network](#) encourages congregations to have a Mental Health Sunday on the third Sunday in May, or any Sunday that works best for congregations to highlight the topic. [Mental Health Sunday Resources](#) are available.

[Arthritis Awareness Month](#)

[Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month](#) There are several on-demand webinars related to bone health.

For Those Who Like to Plan Ahead, Here Are Some links for June:

[Men's Health Awareness Month](#)

[Migraine and Headache Awareness Month](#)

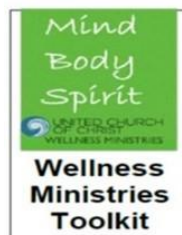
UCC GENERAL SYNOD: June 30 – July 4, 2023



[Registration](#) is now open.

Exhibits: As in past General Synods, UCC Wellness Ministries will have an exhibit that assists in understanding and organizing this circle of care within congregations. Stop by and meet members of the Leadership Team and tell us about your wellness ministries.

Luncheon: A luncheon celebrating Disability, Mental Health, Sexuality, and Wellness Ministries Justice will be held on July 3, 2023 at 12:00 PM. If you are interested in attending, tickets can be purchased through your registration.



The UCC Wellness Ministries Toolkit has finished beta testing. Work has started to get it posted on the UCC website. An announcement will be sent to newsletter subscribers when it is available. The toolkit will be demonstrated at the Wellness Ministries exhibit table at General Synod.

UCC WELLNESS MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP TEAM

Next Wellness Ministries Leadership Meeting is May 11, 2023. Would you like to raise a question or pass along a recommendation to your UCC Wellness Ministries Leadership Team? Email wellnessministries@ucc.org and make your request.

Results from the UCC 2023 Supplemental Survey: Last year UCC Wellness Ministries were approved to have questions included in this year's survey. The UCC Center for Analytics, Research & Development, and Data (CARDD) has just sent us a final listing of responses from churches related to health and wellness ministries. We will be reviewing the data to see how we can increase our connections and communication with these 474 churches. **Thank you to those churches who responded!**



KEEP CONNECTED



Visit our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages: Post comments or share information about your health ministries; join in conversations.

An invitation from the Editors:

- Do you have something you want to share with colleagues?
- Do you have an innovative way you've provided wellness ministries?
- Have a question about health and wellness ministries?

Let us hear about it – you could be featured in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Contact us at wellnessministries@ucc.org





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