



MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

Linking Lives for Health and Wholeness



UCC Wellness Ministries Newsletter

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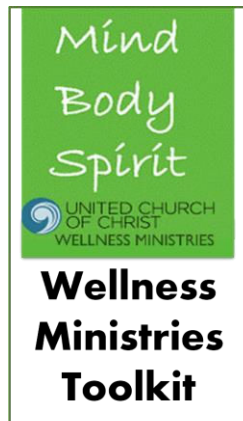
REFLECTION:

Let us not become weary of doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

Although often weary, we never gave up on developing the first online Wellness Ministries Toolkit. The Wellness Ministries Team gathered the information, the OrgStory team created a functional, beautiful communication tool, and the UCC OPTIC team programmed



it into the UCC.org website. Now every congregation may reap the benefits.



The New UCC Wellness Ministries Toolkit Is Now Available Online!

This Toolkit, available at no charge, provides concise information with embedded hyperlinks that allow you to find more in-depth knowledge and provides samples of tools to help you develop or enhance your Wellness Ministries. This *UCC Wellness Ministries Toolkit* replaces the *UCC Called to Care: A Notebook for Lay Caregivers* and the *UCC Faith Community Nurse Manual*.

Section 1 – Envisioning Wellness Ministries answers the questions of What? Who? Why? and Where? You will find that the UCC has a history of promoting health and healing ministries, recognizing that health and health care are social and economic justice issues.

Section 2 – Establishing and Growing Wellness Ministries provides information and tools to assist the process as each congregation develops its programs based on the resources and needs within their congregation and the community it serves.

Section 3 – Exemplars of Wellness Ministries of Care provides examples and resources shared by those actively developing and sustaining diverse Wellness Ministries programs. Additional exemplars will be added periodically.

Want to take a look? Go to UCC.org. In the upper right-hand corner, Search: Wellness Ministries Toolkit. This takes you to the [Wellness Ministries Toolkit](#) landing page. This page provides an overview of the whole Toolkit and access to Section 1.

To delve into Section 2 and Section 3, you must register. Your contact information will enable us to alert you when the content is updated. Once registered, you will receive a password to access the complete site. Please do not share it. Reach out to us if you have any questions.

Blessings on your journey of sharing God's healing and sense of wholeness!

A TIMELY HEALTH TIP

Safely Enjoying Summertime

With warmer weather, many of us spend more time outside. This can improve our overall health and wellness. It offers many opportunities to be physically active and promotes mental health and stress reduction. However, while participating in activities that make us feel good, we must also take precautions.

- Practice sun safety. [What can I do to reduce my risk of skin cancer?](#)
- Beat the heat. Heat-related illnesses and deaths are preventable. [What causes heat-related illnesses?](#)
- Provide your body with the fluids it needs. [How can I avoid dehydration in hot weather?](#)
- Be well and rejuvenate during these summer months.



WELLNESS MINISTRIES FOCUS

Addressing the Loneliness Epidemic



You can feel lonely even if you have a lot of people around you because loneliness is about the quality of your connections. Recent studies have linked the [health risks of social isolation and loneliness](#) to heart disease and stroke, Type 2 diabetes, depression and anxiety, addiction, suicidality and self-harm, dementia, and earlier death. In our Wellness Ministries, we often address these medical conditions. Now we are challenged to use this new knowledge to address a cause.

In early May, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released [Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation](#), an advisory on the healing effects of social connection and community. It provides an overview of the situation, explains how social relationship impacts an individual's health and well-being as well as communities, and recommends actions that individuals, parents, caregivers, and communities might take to provide a culture of connection.

Congregations have a long history of offering participants a sense of purpose and connection. We have organized activities and groups of all ages that serve one another within the congregation and their outreach ministries. The release of an evidence based advisory is a call to action to take our experience and actively promote stronger social connections.

- Create opportunities and spaces for inclusive social connection
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- Embed social connection in internal policies, practices, and programs

- Actively seek and build partnerships with other community institutions
- Talk about the value of social connection among community members
- Foster a culture of connection in the broader community by leading by example.

Additional information that explains loneliness and how individuals can respond:

- [7 Types of Loneliness and Why It Matters](#)
 - [10 Things to Do When You Feel Lonely](#)
-

LINKS TO THIS MONTH'S NATIONAL HEALTH-RELATED TOPICS

These links provide information from reputable sources that you can use for worship bulletin inserts, bulletin board displays, and newsletter articles.

For **JUNE**:

- [Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month](#)
- [Men: Take Charge of Your Health Month](#)
- [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\) Month](#)
- [Scleroderma Awareness Month](#)
- [Scoliosis Awareness Month](#)

For **JULY**, when you want to plan ahead:

- [Fireworks Safety Month](#)
 - [Healthy Vision Month](#)
 - [Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month](#)
 - [National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
 - [Sun Safety Month](#)
-

WEB-BASED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR CHURCHES:

These resources are available from The Insurance Board for you to watch at any time.

- [Abuse Prevention: Current Research, Trends, and Best Practices](#)
- [Preventing Slips and Falls](#)

UPDATE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF YOUR UCC WELLNESS MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP TEAM:

Your Wellness Ministries Leadership Team meets via Zoom at 3:30 on the second Thursday of the month. The main items we addressed this past month were:

General Synod June 30th - July 4th, in Indianapolis, IN, has the theme of *Making All Things New* and promises to be an exciting time. You may attend in person or virtually. We are carefully planning so that you will be well-represented by your Leadership Team.



- **Voice Without Vote**

Aly Breisch and Peggy Matteson, co-chairs of the Wellness Ministries Leadership Team will be prepared to speak to issues of wellness and healthcare justice during the discussion of Resolutions.

- **Exhibit Hall**

Aly and Peggy will staff an exhibit that will provide an understanding of the variety of Wellness Ministries congregations provide. Come by and visit us.

- **Luncheon**

Peggy is working with the caterer to ensure that the menu for the *Celebrating Disability, Mental Health, Sexuality, and Wellness Ministries and Justice* luncheon on Monday, July 3rd, is as compatible as possible with the nutritional limitations of attendees so that everyone feels welcome. Not an easy task since so many of us now have food sensitivities and allergies.

- **Community Care Space**

Synod is a hectic time. So Aly and Peggy are collaborating to provide a safe place for attendees to retreat from the hustle and bustle and take time for self-care. More than 700 prayer shawls have been donated from local churches and will be available. Finger labyrinths and coloring supplies are also being collected.

- **Meditation Space**

Aly is collaborating with the UCC Contemplatives in developing a quiet space for meditation.

NEED YOUR HELP!

UCC Wellness Ministries Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation

We need your help in identifying Wellness Ministries that have met the challenges of COVID within their congregation. Please nominate yourself or others by contacting us at wellnessministries@ucc.org ASAP!

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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