



Dr. Boise Kimber, President
www.hopenbc.com

TASTE TEST SUNDAY 2026 TOOLKIT

Sharing Healthier Desserts That
Taste Good

Sunday, March 15, 2026
#TTSNBC2026



**UNITED FOR
WELLNESS**
THE NBCUSA
RESPONDS TO DIABETES

What Is Taste Test Sunday?

Taste Test Sunday began in 2008 through the **Northwest Mississippi Rising Sun Usher Federation** to promote healthier meals at church gatherings by serving healthier desserts. NBCUSA H.O.P.E. adopted the observance in 2011, expanding it into a national wellness moment rooted in fellowship, cultural pride, and faith-based health promotion.

In 2026, Taste Test Sunday is a signature activation of **United for Wellness**, NBCUSA's denomination-wide initiative to reduce diabetes disparities and make NBCUSA the healthiest major denomination in America.



On March 15, we invite every NBCUSA church to:

- Sample diabetes-friendly desserts after worship
- Teach members how to make healthy substitutions
- Collect recipes for a **Healthy Desserts Cookbook**
- Celebrate wellness as worship and stewardship

Why Taste Test Sunday Matters for Black Communities

1. Diabetes and Obesity Disproportionately Affect Black Americans

- Black adults are **24% more likely** than U.S. adults overall to have diabetes
- Black Americans die from diabetes **78% more often** than the national average
- Black adults are nearly **twice as likely** as white adults to develop type 2 diabetes
- Obesity rates remain high: **38.7% of Black men** and **55.9% of Black women**

2. Diabetes Complications Hit Black Families Harder

- Black adults with diabetes experience:
 - Over **2× higher rates** of kidney failure
 - Increased risk of amputations and vision loss

3. Taste Test Sunday Is a Culturally Rooted Intervention

Taste Test Sunday aligns with United for Wellness pillars:

- **Spiritual Discipline:** Caring for the body as a temple
- **Cultural Relevance:** Honoring Black food traditions with healthier adaptations
- **Community Impact:** Using the church as a trusted hub for prevention
- **Legacy Building:** Passing healthier habits to future generations

How Taste Test Sunday Fits into United for Wellness

Purpose of United for Wellness. United for Wellness is a faith-rooted wellness initiative designed to help congregations honor God through holistic health, diabetes prevention, and intergenerational healing. It affirms that wellness is worship, and that caring for our bodies is a sacred act of stewardship.

Education and Empowerment

Taste Test Sunday teaches practical skills—healthy swaps, portion control, and recipe makeovers.

Community Outreach & Advocacy

Churches can pair Taste Test Sunday with screenings, recipe contests, or a “Know Your Numbers” station.

Youth and Intergenerational Engagement

Invite Youth Wellness Ambassadors to lead dessert demos or judge the recipe contest.

Legacy and Sustainability

Use this event to launch your **Healthier Desserts Cookbook**, Partner Covenant Cards, or annual wellness calendar.

Program Ideas for Your Church

- **Healthier Dessert Tasting Stations** with scripture cards
- **Recipe Swap Wall** featuring family favorites made healthier
- **Live Demo:** “Soul Food, Sacred Choices”
- **Youth-Led TikTok/Reels Challenge:** #TTSNBC2026
- **Testimony Moment:** Members share how they’re managing diabetes or making healthier choices
- **Screening Corner:** Blood pressure, glucose, BMI (partner with local clinics or HBCUs)

Healthier Dessert Ideas

These options draw from Black culinary traditions and reputable recipe sources:

1. Pecan (*without pecans if allergic*) Pie Bites

Uses almond milk, flaxseed, and brown rice syrup—lower sugar, big flavor.

2. Vegan Sweet Potato Pie

A plant-based makeover of a beloved classic using coconut milk and maple syrup.

3. Blackberry Cobbler (Reduced Sugar Version)

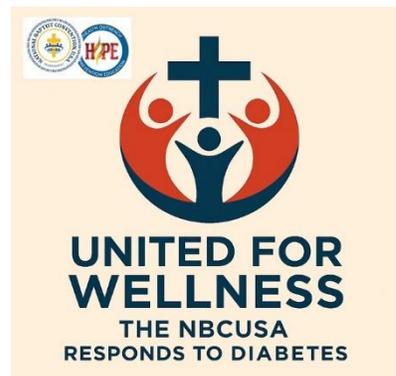
Fresh berries, less added sugar, and a lighter topping.

4. Black Devil’s Food Cake

Uses applesauce and buttermilk to reduce fat and calories.

5. Air Fryer Caramelized Bananas

Simple, fast, and naturally sweetened with honey and cinnamon.



Communication Tools for Taste Test Sunday 2026

Effective communication helps amplify your impact, engage your congregation, and connect with the broader NBCUSA health ministry network. Use these tools to promote Taste Test Sunday 2026 and reinforce the message that wellness is worship.

Hashtags

Use these hashtags across all platforms to unify your message and join the national conversation:

- **#TTSNBC2026** – Official Taste Test Sunday tag
- **#UnitedForWellness** – NBCUSA’s health ministry movement

Social Media Engagement

- Post your **Taste Test Sunday selfies**, dessert station photos, and recipe highlights to facebook.com/NBCUSAHOPE
- Encourage youth to create short videos or reels showcasing their favorite healthier desserts
- Share testimonials from members who are making lifestyle changes
- Use United for Wellness branding colors (deep purple, vibrant green, gold) in your graphics and captions

Bulletin Inserts and Worship Materials

- Include scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 10:31 and 3 John 1:2 to reinforce the spiritual foundation of wellness
- Share tips for healthier dessert swaps (e.g., applesauce instead of oil, oat milk instead of cream)
- Add a reminder about upcoming health observances and screenings
- Feature a short prayer or responsive reading from the Taste Test Sunday litany

Branding and Visual Identity

- Use the official **United for Wellness color palette**:
 - Deep Purple (faith and legacy)
 - Vibrant Green (health and renewal)
 - Gold (joy and celebration)
- Incorporate the **NBCUSA H.O.P.E. logo** and **United for Wellness cross + roots imagery**
- Apply consistent fonts: bold serif for headers, clean sans-serif for body text
- Use branded templates for flyers, social posts, and signage

For a complete listing of 2026 Suggested Health and Wellness Observances, you may go to www.hopenbc.com/health-observances.

H.O.P.E. HHS Partnership
National Baptist Convention, USA, Incorporated
 1775 Memphis Street, Suite B
 Hernando, MS 38632
info@hopenbc.com www.hopenbc.com
 Phone: (866) 800-4432

Responsive Reading

Leader: So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (*1 Corinthians 10:31, NIV*).

Congregation: Let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God (*2 Corinthians 7:1, NLT*).

Leader: And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (*Acts 10:38, NLT*).

Congregation: I will never forget Your commandments, for You have used them to restore my joy and health (*Psalms 119:93, NLT*).

Leader: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (*Romans 12:2, NIV*).

All: Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again (*1 Thessalonians 5:23, NLT*).

Litany of Health and Wholeness

Congregation: In love, God calls us to health and wholeness in our own lives.

Leader: For all who care for us emotionally, physically and spiritually;
For all who hold us, encourage us and challenge us, who stir us emotionally to make healthy responses to the ebb and flow of living;
For all who provide guidance and support for our sexual and mental health,
We give you thanks.

Congregation: In love, God calls us to mission among those in need.

Leader: For all who offer food or shelter or a listening heart;
For all who gently hold a troubled hand or sit silently in simple accompaniment;
For all who offer therapy or surgery, who bring intervention or enable rehabilitation with a full measure of hope,
We give you thanks.

Congregation: In love, God calls us to care for the least among the children of God.

Leader: For all who honor and care for those who are aging, who rock babies and children in need of comfort in an unkind and terrifying world;
For all who offer care in community clinics and at health fairs, who diligently work to end epidemics, who value the disabled among us;
For all who see each person's worth and actively oppose discrimination,
We give you thanks.

Congregation: In love, God calls us to open our hearts to the meaning of discipleship.

All: Grant that we may have the wisdom and will, O God, to embrace the healing and service ministry of Jesus Christ and make it truly our own. Inspire us, Holy One, to trust that your healing love will use our humble efforts to bring health and wholeness to us and to the whole human family.

Source: Rev. William R. Johnson, VP for Member Relations, UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, www.chhsm.org
Published by the Health Ministries of the United Church of Christ

Sermon Starters

Every year, Taste Test Sunday invites us to rediscover something powerful: **healthy choices are not a punishment. They are a testimony.** Scripture shows again and again that God cares about what strengthens the body, renews the mind, and nourishes the spirit. These two sermon starters—*Daniel’s Confidence in God* and *Trinity Wellness*—remind us that wellness is woven into the biblical story. From Daniel’s plant-forward courage in Babylon to John’s heartfelt prayer for Gaius’ health, the Bible affirms that caring for our bodies is an act of discipleship. Together, these messages help congregations see Taste Test Sunday not as a diet moment, but as a spiritual moment—an opportunity to honor God with joyful, flavorful, faithful choices.

Sermon Starter 1: Daniel’s Confidence in God (Daniel 1:11–16)

- Daniel models **healthy resistance** in a culture of excess.
- His plant-forward diet becomes a testimony: “Even the unbelievers saw the difference.”
- Connect to Taste Test Sunday: healthy choices can be joyful, flavorful, and faithful.

Daniel stands as a model of **healthy resistance in a culture of excess**. Surrounded by royal foods, rich meats, and indulgent wines, he chooses a simple, plant-forward diet—not out of fear, but out of faith. His decision becomes a testimony: after ten days, “*even the unbelievers saw the difference.*” Daniel shows that obedience to God can transform not only our spiritual lives but our physical well-being.

For Taste Test Sunday, Daniel reminds us that **healthy choices can be joyful, flavorful, and faithful**. When we choose foods that honor our bodies, we echo Daniel’s courage and declare that wellness is part of our witness. Taste Test Sunday becomes our modern-day “ten-day test”—a chance to show that healthy desserts can taste good and glorify God.

Sermon Starter 2: Trinity Wellness (3 John 1:2–3)

- United for Wellness frames health as **body + mind + spirit**.
- A “sick” Gaius could not lead well—neither can we if we neglect our health.
- Jesus’ ministry shows God cares for the whole person.

John’s prayer for Gaius—“*that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers*”—captures the heart of **Trinity Wellness: body + mind + spirit**. Gaius was a faithful leader, but John understood that a sick body can hinder a strong calling. God desires wholeness, not just

holiness. Jesus' ministry confirms this truth: He preached to the soul, comforted the mind, and healed the body.

United for Wellness builds on this biblical foundation. It teaches that we cannot lead well, serve well, or love well if we neglect our health. Taste Test Sunday becomes a practical expression of this theology—an invitation to align our physical habits with our spiritual commitments. When we care for the whole person, we honor the God who created the whole person.

Closing Prayer for Taste Test Sunday

“Lord, bless the hands that prepared these desserts, the bodies that will be nourished by them, and the generations who will inherit our choices. Make our wellness a witness, our food a testimony, and our fellowship a pathway to healing. Amen.”

Prolog: Why We Fight in Faith

Diabetes is not just a diagnosis—it is a spiritual, cultural, and communal challenge that touches how we eat, move, pray, gather, and care for one another. As the Taste Test Sunday Toolkit notes, this disease “affects how we eat, move, pray, and live,” and its impact is felt deeply in Black families and congregations. Yet, through the lens of faith, we see a different story emerging—one rooted in resilience, restoration, and revival. God calls us not to fear the realities we face, but to confront them with wisdom, courage, and collective action.

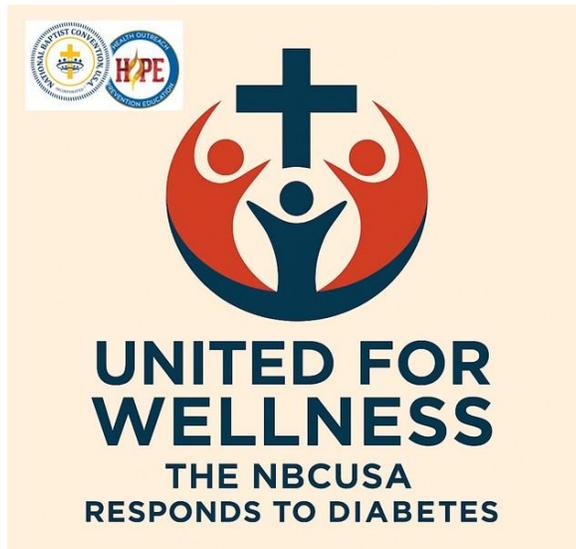
United for Wellness stands on four pillars that guide this work and ground Taste Test Sunday as more than a health event—it is a spiritual moment:

United for Wellness is built on four pillars:

- **Spiritual Discipline:** Wellness is a daily act of devotion.
- **Cultural Relevance:** Health education must honor Black traditions.
- **Community Impact:** Churches are trusted hubs for healing.
- **Legacy Building:** Health is a gift we pass on to future generations.

Together, these pillars form the foundation of *United for Wellness* and the heartbeat of Taste Test Sunday. They remind us that our fight is not only against disease. It is for our families, our culture, our faith, and our future.

Diabetes is not just a diagnosis—it is a spiritual and communal challenge. It affects how we eat, move, pray, and live. But through the lens of faith, we see a different story: one of resilience, restoration, and revival.



Learn more about NBCUSA H.O.P.E. and sign up for our monthly webinar below.
www.hopenbc.com

[TempleCare Matters Webinar](#)

