

Unity Fellowship Church Movement

HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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UFCM EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT



HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE

TO SUPPORT THE WHOLISTIC HEALTH OF UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT AND THE COMMUNITITES THEY SERVE.

UFCM House of Bishops- Beatitude Bishop Zachary G. Jones – Sr. Bishop Jacquelyn D. Holland - Bishop Harris Thomas (Emeritus)
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DISCLAIMER: The Unity Fellowship Church Movement's Health Innovative wants our readers to know the views and testimonials shared are that of our writers. Please consult your medical providers with health concerns.

IS THERE A HEALTH ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED
THROUGH THE UFCM HEALTH & WELLNESS IINIATIVE?
PLEASE SEND IT TO: gjerrilee@gmail.com

WELCOME TO WELLNESS

This is your first step to healthier living. Unity Fellowship Church Movement Health and Wellness Initiative encourages you to move in the direction of self-care, self-love, and wellness.



UFCM Health Initiative Newsletter

February 2025

A Word from the Editor...

This issue is dedicated in LOVE to our community and faith leaders. All in the name of keeping them healthy and serving in wellness.

Unfortunately, Faith and Community leaders are the unhealthiest people. This can happen because of the expectations they have for themselves and the expectations others put on them. The sense of a calling to serve others can also sabotage their health. It is important that Faith and Community leaders realize that self-care is taking care of those you serve as well.

Leadership is not a spectator sport. It takes teamwork to serve in wellness. Leaders who demonstrate healthy living are more effective when serving.

Much Love,

Reverend Jerri Lee



LOVE IS: KEEPING FAITH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Leaving self-care and healthcare to our individual leaders is often a challenge because of their commitment to serve others, many times forgetting about self-service. With Leadership, comes expectations. Too many times, people expect things of leaders that make leaders unhealthy. All leaders need space and time to REST.

Below are some ways to encourage them to establish a healthier lifestyle.

MEDICAL: partnership with a healthcare provider to manage medical care. It should not be a one-sided relationship. Doctors have education and experience, but you should yourselves better than any doctor. When it comes to your medical care your input is important. Participate in managing your healthcare. Serving others can be a high stress calling. Poorly managed stress can lead to medical conditions which are preventable. Think of medical care as a tool for keeping you fit and being able to continue to serve.

WORK: ask for help when you need it. Leaders sometimes have a sense of always being on call. This makes it difficult to shut down or do something else. It is important to appreciate the skills, talents and gifts you bring while still maintaining a balance of whole life. Set boundaries between serving and personal or family life. Ask what part of your work or serving feeds you and what part has become a chore.

MOVEMENT: This is the easiest thing for leaders to eliminate from a busy schedule. If you consider how the parts of the body are linked and rotate and reach in every direction, then you should understand our bodies are made to move. Movement is how we can celebrate our body and spirit connection. No matter what our physical activity level is now, you can find ways to enjoy movement. Try something you have never tried before to see if it brings you joy. Start with small changes in movement. A few extra steps or a few minutes with a new activity.

EMOTIONAL: managing stress and understanding your feelings help to take better care of yourself. Self-care habit can be difficult for leaders to form while serving others. It is easy to turn to unhealthy or familiar habits in times of stress. It could be in the form of food, mindless TV, excessive spending or alcohol. By understanding your feelings, it is possible to make changes to manage stress in healthier ways. Start by finding one key change to reduce stress.

NUTRITION: begin to make smart food choices and develop healthier eating habits. Leaders can be in situations where food choices are limited and beyond their control. Good nutrition builds strong bodies to allow you to continue to lead. What you eat matters. It is important to understand how food affects your overall well-being and ability to lead. Learn healthy portion sizes. When you are eating away from home you can apply them. Food plays a big part in communities and celebrations, know how to manage a healthy way of providing your body with fuel.

“Crossroads large and small are part of every life journey. When the uncertainty of what’s ahead feels overwhelming, asking yourself, “What is the very next right thing to do? May help you find your bearings and momentum.” True North Tracy Hilts

REDEFINING CARE WITH TECHNOLOGY TELEMEDICINE

“Telemedicine is bridging the gaps in access to healthcare, bringing expert advice to remote and underserved areas. Wearable health devices monitor vitals and alert users to potential issues, enabling proactive and preventive healthcare. Nutritional science is also advancing with personalized diet plans improving health outcomes. As health technology evolves it empowers individuals to take charge of their wellbeing.” Wellness Focus Week

INTERESTING MEDICAL INFORMATION

- Wisdom teeth are trapped in the jaw because there was no more space , which is why they cause problems. Ancestors used them as backup teeth for hard to chew foods. They were originally a third set of molars.
- External ear is an orienting system no longer used by humans. Pets’ ears snap to attention at interesting or startling noise. Human still have the same muscles, and the brain circuits associated with them.
- Goosebumps are tiny muscles attached to hair follicles. Because humans have evolved to be less hairy, those muscles give us goosebumps.
- The gallbladder is not an essential organ. If removed the liver can perform the same job.

YOUR PHARMACIST IS A MEDICAL SUPPORT

Pharmacists play a major role in our healthcare system, ensuring that patients receive the correct medications and understanding how to take the safely. Also, they can give you an indication if any medication is contradicting another medication. Pharmacists not only dispense medications but also provide advice on drug interactions, side effects and the correct use of medications.

CAUSES OF LEG CRAMPS...HOW TO AVOID THEM

A leg cramp is a sharp, sudden contraction or tightening of the muscle in the calf. It usually lasts a few seconds to a few minutes. Some of the causes of leg cramps could be:

- ❖ Dehydration- especially during the summer months.
- ❖ Mineral Deficiency-loss of electrolytes or essential minerals that affect the muscle.ie sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium.
- ❖ Overuse of the muscle. Extended period of exercising or movement.
- ❖ Fatigue or deficient diet.
- ❖ Sitting or standing for prolonged periods of time.
- ❖ Medications such as diuretics, or iron supplements.
- ❖ AVOIDING LEG CRAMPS: Stay hydrated, get plenty of rest, proper nourishment. Stretching the muscle gently can ease the discomfort for the moment. If cramps persist always contact your primary care physician.

ALSO LOOK FOR UFCM
PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE
ONCE A MONTH MENTAL
WELLNESS SESSION WITH A
LICENSED THERAPIST
BEGINNING IN APRIL.



**UFCM HEALTH INITIATIVE
UPCOMING EVENTS**

MAR 01 **UFCM HEALTH INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER**
FOURTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

DEALING WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS **APR 17**
PRESENTER: REV. DR. GABRIELLA DENNERY

Change Your **N.A.M.E.** **Outreach** **UFC MOVEMENT**
Mentorship • Support • Mental Health • Encouragement

PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE WELLNESS EVENT **JUN 07**
@SACRED SOULS UCC CHARLOTTE, NC

PLEASE CONTACT REV. JERRI LEE FOR MORE INFO:
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TOP ALKALINE FOODS TO EAT AND ACID FOODS TO AVOID

Dr. John Neustadt

Diet is one of the biggest determinants of your health. What you put into your body every day affects everything. Your body's biochemistry, your mood, your brain, immunity, muscles, tendons, bones, nerves and kidneys.

Unfortunately, when it comes to diet, most people are on autopilot following a Western diet, that contains foods high in acidic content and low in alkaline content. The Western dietary pattern, also called the Standard American Diet (SAD) is high in processed foods, fried foods and red meat. It is low in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, omega-3 fatty acids and proteins such as nuts, seeds and fish.

Many studies have shown that the Western Diet increases inflammation and cholesterol. It also causes and contributes to the development of osteoporosis, heart disease and high blood pressure, as well as diabetes.

Your body has evolved to work best when provided with the right environment to function. The internal environment in your body requires a healthy mix of nutrients and when it does not get them, consistently and over time things go haywire.

THE ROLE OF pH: One way diet affects your health is through a process called "acid-alkaline balance." The pH (potential of hydrogen) determines a substance's acidity or alkalinity and is measured on a scale of 0 to 14. The lower the pH the more acidic the solution. When a solution is in the middle range neither acid nor alkaline has a neutral pH of 7. The body regulates pH in very narrow ranges. Stomach acid, which is important for healthy digestion and protection against potential infections, has a low pH, about 2-3. When the pH of your stomach cannot get low enough it causes problems with digestion and can create acid reflux. Most people assume that there is too much acid.

When the blood becomes too acidic there are mechanisms in the body to adjust the pH to a healthy level. One way it does this is by releasing calcium from the bone. Over the years this may contribute to osteoporosis.

ACIDIC FOODS: Much of The Western diet is composed of proteins, cereals, sugars and processed foods. The foods that exist in nature are alkaline producing. But manufactured and processed foods transform the nutrient content of foods and makes them mostly acid producing. Processed foods are highly acidic and stripped of many nutrients.

ALKALINE FOODS: The opposite of acidic foods is alkaline foods. If foods such as vegetables are eaten in small quantities, their alkaline content is insufficient to neutralize surplus acids. Natural alkaline foods balance pH and provide vitamins K,A,C, beta-carotene and minerals like iron, Magnesium, potassium and calcium.



The Olkiama (Circle of Elders) Corner Health News for those 50 and Older

STANDING FOR THE SENSATIONAL 70s and 80s “Aging is not what it used to be”

Everyone’s aging process is different. For years, the mind set of aging has been “sitting on the front porch in a rocking chair.” That is no longer true. The following stories are the first in a series of how to celebrate a healthy and active life in your 70s and 80s.



Tracey Africa Norman - UFC NewArk

“As I celebrate my 70s my life is full and joyful even when things are not perfect. I stay active by walking, stretching, doing crunches and I am blessed to still be working as a model. Meditation is a big part of my mental well-being, and I am purposeful with my nutrition.

Eating healthy with a balanced diet of vegetables, fruits, fish poultry as well as low sugar and salt keeps my energy intact. Some of the foods I eat are, fruit salad, fish, ground turkey, chicken breast, mixed vegetables, spinach cauliflower and rice. I only eat bread on the weekends. What keeps me eating healthy is that I set aside a cheat day or two (Friday & Saturday) when I eat whatever I want, but only on those days. This way I am not feeling deprived of anything.”

Gloria Irby - UFC NewArk

“It is important for me to be healthy and to stay active. I enjoy chair aerobics, walking, soulful seniors’ choir, and senior dance with the Alvin Ailey company. Also, by volunteering, it keeps my brain active and I do not become socially isolated as many people do at my age. As I turn 70 it is even more important that I establish a stronger relationship with my primary care provider. I have learned to ask questions and research any medications I am prescribed. A new thing I have learned to do is check with my pharmacist to see if I have a problem with any of my medications that have been prescribed. I am careful about my nutrition and what I feed my body. Low salt diet helps me control my blood pressure as well as eating plenty of vegetables, lean meats, low sugar fruits and drinking enough water.”



Debra Houston, UFC NewArk

“My health and fitness journey at 70. I turned 70 January 19, 2025. I still work full time and treat my health and wellness as a priority in my life. I had a stress fracture repaired in my right hip in May of 2024. Because I was an avid runner, over time the stress to my bone took its toll. But it did not stop me from re-adjusting my work outs and continuing to exercise. After my fracture repair (not a break) I had 8 weeks to recover.

During that time, I developed a nutrition regimen that I still use. I have a total of 5 fruits and vegetables every day, with my protein, and I drink 8 glasses of water daily. I limit myself to eating out no more than once a week. I bake or broil my meat, and I take my lunch to work every day. For my fitness regimen, I walk 30 minutes a day before work and at least 2-3 miles on the weekend. It is simple, basic, and requires no exercise equipment, just a pair of good walking shoes. As seniors we must take control of our health and wellness. It can be done. Start with small changes and work your way up to a routine that is easy to maintain for you. Here’s to your health.”

Myrtice Whye - UFC Columbia

I stay healthy with a variety of movements. My diet includes fruit, vegetables and lean meat and fish. I try to be conscious of everything in moderation. I recently had shoulder replacement surgery, during which I was diagnosed as diabetic. As a result, I had to rethink what I included in my diet and how I moved. An important part of my wellness is my mental health. Prayer and keeping my stress levels low helps me especially during my recovery from surgery. I discovered your mental outlook plays a big part in how you recover from injury, surgery or any illness.

Marlene McLaurin - UFC Columbia

“Everything in moderation.” Since my joint replacement I have found ways to stay active, even with a walker. MOVE is my motto. Stretch when I can, walk, chair exercise and more. I don’t have a special diet, however low salt, no salt and low sugar are what I follow. I eat a lot of vegetables, but watch my rice and potatoes intake, using sweet potatoes as a change. Also, I include chicken, turkey and fish. I find that it is important for me to have enough protein in my diet. My mental well-being is supported with prayer and talking to professionals. My goal for 2025 is to not need a walker anymore and return to water aerobics.



Garna Durroh

First Baptist Church of Glenarden, MD

“As I approach 70, I am living my best life. Having fun.” Nourishing my body with such foods as fish, vegetables, smoothies, turkey and other foods high in protein and vitamins. Maintaining a good energy level is important to me. I have been active most of my life and am conscious of what I nourish my body with.



As I approach 70 years of age it is even more important for me to remain active as it supports both my physical and mental well-being. I stay active by working out five days a week, cycling, coaching youth basketball and soccer and roller skating. Don't let what people say about your age dictate your wellness.

Charlotte "Aunt Toot" Davis - UFC NewArk



"I love dancing, especially house music." It is the exercise and the music that keep me healthy. I was in a car accident and fractured my leg. It was a very difficult time for me, but I kept moving as much as I could. It also meant that at the age of 85. (87 now) I had to retire. I went through more of a mental wellness challenge than the physical challenge. I could not dance, but I could enjoy the beat of the music. While healing I needed to be care about my nutrition so I did not gain weight. I moved around as much as I could. Staying active was important to me. Even on my crutches I found a way to dance.

Asabi Davis - UFC NewArk

"At 70 years young swimming has become a daily lifestyle for me. Exercise as a senior is very important for mental health, joint and muscle stability along with just feeling good about oneself. Remember the heart is a muscle. Heart health and good cardio keeps it working in good condition. Cardio is also a part of a consistent fitness routine. I love to dance. The seniors in my New Jersey household go to summer outdoor music events, which keeps us all active. I firmly believe "Health is wealth, keep moving."



STAYING HEALTHY AS YOU GET OLDER

Staying healthy as you are older is about adjusting daily habits and making smart choices that assist in overall wellness. Helpful suggestions:

1. **Consistency:** fitness and wellness is not about sporadic bursts of working out, but about consistency. Making health a non-negotiable part of a daily routine. It's not about what you do occasionally but what you do consistently.
2. **Hydration:** is a priority. Good hydration is often overlooked when it comes to fitness and health. As you age, the body's ability to conserve water decreases, making hydration more important. Hydration helps to keep joints lubricated and aids digestion.
3. **Prioritize Good Sleep:** Sleep is the body's natural way of repairing and rejuvenating itself. Sleep deprivation has been linked to weight gain, decreased concentration and lower immune function. Adequate sleep aids in memory and helps to keep the heart healthy. Creating a sleep-friendly environment and establishing a regular sleep schedule is beneficial to wellness.
4. **A Balanced Diet:** is non-negotiable. Fitness and wellness is also about physical activity and what you eat. A balanced diet fuels the body with the right nutrients for energy and health. It is good to avoid crash diets and make healthy eating a lifestyle.
5. **Listen to your body:** The human body is very smart and will send signals when something is wrong. Know when to rest and know when to push harder.
6. **Embrace Aging:** Understand that getting older means bodies change and can't always do what they used to do. Don't fight against change, instead adapt, modify routines, try new activities. Appreciate the wisdom and experiences that comes with age.
7. **Take Time for Mindfulness:** The importance of slowing down and being present in the moment. Experience deep breathing and meditation.
8. **Do Not Obsess Over the Scale:** The scale does not tell the whole story. It does not account for muscle mass, bone density or overall health.



ARE you 70 years and older?

Tell us how you maintain your health and wellness. Submit your story to gjerrilee@gmail.com



TRANSGENDER HEALTH CORNER

LOOK ALIVE IN 2025

Protecting your physical and mental well-being.

Br. Merrick Moses, OSB

In the blink of an eye, it is 2025. For many of us in gender diverse communities, 2024 was a hard and blistering year. After seeing so many anti-trans and anti-queer adds that are not true, about our community. Many of us were saddened, abused, harassed and shamed by all the insanity and mayhem. It was a difficult year. Most of us thought the outcome of the election would be a historical landmark of progress and opportunity for the American people. Despite the dire consequences, we should not be in despair. Why? Because resilience, tenacity and strength lie in our DNA.

We must remember the resilience and tenacity of our great ancestors. We must remember the gains we have made over the past 50 to 60 years came with blood, sweat and tears. From the gay panic scares of the 70s to the AIDS epidemic through the 80s and 90s, we the community rose to and are still rising to the occasion. We did not let the haters win. We created community healthcare centers which have morphed into genuine federal health centers serving all communities. This is especially important for our trans community. Our unwavering struggle for freedom, justice and equality never stops. That is why we should use this winter to get fit in body, mind and spirit.

What does this win look like? It looks like everyone taking care of their mental, spiritual and physical health. Despite the stress, taking time each day to eat healthy food, breathe deeply, embrace nature and seek therapy when necessary. It looks like embracing meditation and its benefits. There are many ways to do this. Research the way that works for you. We can't win the battle if we are not as healthy as possible. Our bodies are the vehicle that enables us to move in action and love. It depends on our self-care to keep it in working order. "If you don't love yourself, how the hell will you love anyone else?" RuPaul.

Our society has always been on a roller coaster of good and bad, negative and positive. As a result, our physical and mental wellness is always being challenged. Learning to master our minds instead of our minds mastering us is important. Our thoughts often affect our physical well-being. 2025 promises to be filled with changes and choices. Some will be joyful, needed and celebrated, while others will not. When maintaining mental wellness do not be afraid to seek a mental wellness professional, enjoy the benefits of being outdoors, commune

with nature and the Divine, try hugging a tree (don't worry what it looks like to others), and acknowledge your emotions. As human beings' emotions are essential to our humanity and letting us know when we need to seek healing.

Encouraging the trans community to heal as a community, supporting each other.



**Wellness is Energy
Healing is a process.
A healthy heart through
healthy living.**

Unity Fellowship Health Initiative Newsletter is looking for informative health articles and anyone interested in working on the newsletter monthly. We need writers and researchers.

Please contact Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee or Rev. Cheryl Bragg.

- Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee- gjerrilee@gmail.com or (201) 289-6941
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PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE**

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“Wellness is an Energy: Healing is a Process”