



# MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

Linking Lives for Health and Wholeness

 **Subscribe**

UCC Wellness Ministries Newsletter

June 2024, Volume 9, Issue 6

---

## REFLECTION



### God of Rainbows

Many of us, individually and collectively, have become dispirited by the *stormy weather* we have been experiencing, both literally and figuratively.

We question:

*Through the flood of starving people, warring factions, and despair, who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care?*

We ask for insight:

*As we stand in a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes, Grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams.*

God's unwavering presence shines through the gloom and uncertainty surrounding us. It offers assurance that we are not alone and provides direction.

*God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,*

*We, your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.*

Verses two and three of the hymn, *In the Midst of New Dimensions*, describe our current life experience. Yet, even as we experience these rainy days of uncertainty and change, our God of rainbows reminds us we are never alone. May we each continue to treasure the rainbows. Amen.

(From *The New Century Hymnal*, Copyright © 1995 The Pilgrim Press).

---

## TIMELY HEALTH TIP



### **Help Others Enjoy the Sunshine Safely**

Nearly 5 million people are treated for skin cancer each year in the United States. Skin cancer can be serious and require surgical removal, is expensive to manage, and is sometimes deadly.

Most skin cancers are caused by too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. UV rays are invisible radiation from the sun, tanning beds, and sunlamps. All individuals are at risk; darker skin does not provide protection. More information is available at [Sun Safety Facts](#).

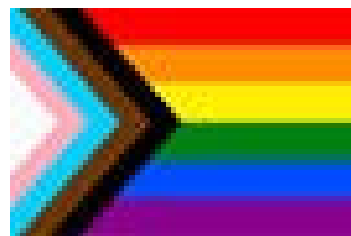
Unfortunately, not everyone can purchase the items necessary to protect themselves. In addition to providing camper scholarships, some congregations care for the youth by giving hats, brims all the way around, sunscreen, sunglasses, and bug spray to help make the youths' camping experiences safer and more enjoyable.

---

## WELLNESS MINISTRIES FOCUS

### **Pride Month - A Celebration of the Many Contributions by the LGBTQIA+ Community**

Pride Month is an annual celebration of the many contributions made by the LGBTQIA+ community to history, society, and cultures worldwide.



Yet some deem our LGBTQIA+ siblings as unworthy of our love, care, and recognition as children of God. The [Pilgrim Press](#) provides resources.

**Love your neighbor as yourself.** UCC Wellness Ministries' mission is to inspire, enable, and empower everyone to experience wellness as they live their lives. Wellness Ministries in local congregations strengthen the UCC by generating and augmenting the interconnected efforts of the people in the pews to provide a circle of care. The UCC is only as strong as its local congregations.

**God created humankind in God's image.** UCC Wellness Ministries is a coveted Open and Affirming ministry as we inform and encourage the grace-filled ministries that together enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual health of all God's children.

- We take scripture as our guide, understanding that all individuals are created in God's image and are blessed and loved equally by God.
- Activities within our ministries vary from setting to setting. Yet, they provide for all individuals to journey together in a mutually supportive manner toward holistic spiritual, physical, and mental health.

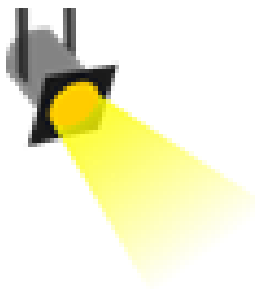
**If one member suffers, all suffer together.** The number of people in the United States who identify as LGBTQIA+ has increased substantially in recent years, particularly among younger generations. Health disparities and health access-related challenges persist across multiple dimensions. [Friendly and competent health care is essential, but it can be challenging for LGBTQIA+ people to find.](#) Current legislative actions make obtaining appropriate care for individuals of all ages even more difficult. As allies and advocates, we can assist in finding the necessary resources.

**Love Your Neighbor Out Loud.** [UCC Love is Louder: Love Your Neighbor Out Loud](#) is a campaign faithfully supporting the spiritual, physical, and mental well-being of LGBTQIA+ siblings by equipping faith communities with resources and tools for just action and care. [Tools for Advocacy](#) – Search by state. It also helps identify welcoming healthcare facilities.

- [Love is Louder Toolkit #1 Communal Care of Trans & Non-binary Siblings](#)
- [Love is Louder Toolkit #2](#) will be available after June 1st – Celebrate Pride and better understand the language of gender and sexuality.

---

## RESOURCES FOR YOUR WELLNESS MINISTRIES



- A just-released resource: [How to Thrive Amidst the Loneliness Epidemic](#)

- [Classification and Its Discontents](#) by Quinn G. Caldwell. *Our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.* 2 Corinthians 3:5b-6 (NRSV). Discussion questions included.
  - [Cultural Competence in the Care of LGBTQ Patients](#)—The LGBTQ community includes all races, ethnic and religious backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses. Individuals experience challenges in finding knowledgeable and competent healthcare providers.
  - [Find Hope Now](#) is an initiative launched by the Southern New England Conference to promote radical inclusion.
  - How [Water is generally sufficient for hydration](#). Use the provided urine color test to measure your hydration level.
  - [How to Identify Nutrition Misinformation and Pseudoscience](#)
  - UCC [Youth mental health toolkit: focus on peer support and welcoming digital spaces](#)
  - [Try Softer](#): A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode and into a Life of Connection and Joy by Aundi Kolber.
  - [What do the letters in LGBTQIA+ stand for?](#)
- 

## UCC WELLNESS MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

### Highlights of our Spring activities

The UCC Wellness Ministries Leadership Team shares their diverse God-given skills to benefit you and your congregations. We invite you to join us as you are able.



If you don't have much time, there are short-term projects that you could enhance based on your experiences. Learn more by reading below.

- The [Wellness Ministries Overview video](#), posted on [UCC Wellness Ministries](#) and [UCC YouTube](#), can be used to teach groups about Wellness Ministries.
- Our Facebook site is having a significant makeover, and an Instagram link is being developed.
- The [Wellness Ministries Pocket Handbook for Visitation](#) supports visitors with prayers and scripture, whether by card, text, e-mail, Zoom, or in person. Printed copies will become available later this summer. Thank you to the Team of volunteers working on this tool.
- [Wellness Ministries podcasts](#) are being developed. Guests will be invited to share information about the Wellness Ministries program in their congregation. Want to share about your congregation? E-mail Wellness Ministries.

Interested in being in fellowship with colleagues from across the country as we develop ways to assist wellness ministers in congregations? [Contact UCCWellnessMinistriesChair@gmail.com/](mailto:UCCWellnessMinistriesChair@gmail.com)

---

## LINKS TO NATIONAL HEALTH-RELATED TOPICS

### June

- [Cataract Awareness Month](#)
- [Migraine and Headache Awareness Month](#) – Imagine a world without headache
- [National Great Outdoors Month](#): This site helps you locate places near you.

### July

- Alert – [More than 4,500 drowning deaths per year](#) - Provides recommendations and cautions
- [Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month](#)
- [Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month](#)
- [UV Safety Month](#)

### *Any Month, But Especially Now*

- [Why and how to help a child stay at a healthy weight.](#)

---

## WELLNESS MINISTRIES-RELATED WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES



- June 5th, 12:00-1:00 pm ET - [Our Whole Lives/ OWL Taking Flight: Raising Kids Beyond the Binary](#) - A conversation with Jamie Bruesehoff, author of *Raising Kids Beyond the Binary: Celebrating God's Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children*.
- [Register Now - UCC All Church Read](#) – Reading [Sacred Self Care: Daily Practices for Nurturing Our Whole Lives](#) by Chanequa Walker-Barnes and [Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human](#) by Cole Arthur Riley.

- At your convenience from The Insurance Board - [Best Practices in Transportation for your Ministry](#)

#### Looking ahead

- UCC Faith INFO has selected two Wellness Ministries sessions for this Fall.

Thursday, Oct. 10th - *Discover Wellness Ministries in Your Congregation*

Thursday, Oct. 17th – *Wellness Ministries Intergenerational Holiday Happenings*

More details to follow!

- *Awaken Your Heart: Be Empowered, Encouraged, and Energized* - Health Ministries Association 2024 Virtual Conference – Oct. 16th, 17th, 23rd, & 24th—more details to follow.

---

## KEEP CONNECTED & SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

We are a community of mutually supportive leaders of all Wellness Ministries.

Debbie Ringen has been working to update our social media connections.

Please tell her what you would like to share by e-mailing [wellnessministries@ucc.org](mailto:wellnessministries@ucc.org)



---

United Church of Christ · 700 Prospect Ave, Cleveland, OH 44115, United States

[Unsubscribe](#)

UCC 1300 East 9th St Cleveland, Ohio 44114 United States

