Overview

The Ministry In-Brief is our way of updating members with exciting news about activities, sessions and events. All resources and activities listed on the site are provided FREE of charge to residents of the Greater Houston Area. Yes, FREE! If you are wondering how we can offer these services free, the answer lies at the heart of what we understand as God’s directive for our lives. “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

After surveying our nine hundred member congregation to identify gifts and talents of every member, we made an awesome discovery. Our members are ready, willing, and able to fulfill 1Peter 4:10. We have been blessed by God to be a blessing to others. The result of this realization is the Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center and associated ministries. We are hoping that this site will be a tool to help demonstrate the dynamic abilities of God’s people and lead them to Jesus Christ. Some services require pre-registration or accompaniment by a member. Space is limited. Call or email us for additional information. Tel: 713.672.2654, Email: bulletin@fwcoc.org
Mentor. This term can be quite expansive, but what does it really mean? According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a mentor is defined as “a trusted counselor or guide” or “tutor, coach.” How do we mentor? Do we give advice without context? Do we answer only when we are asked for an opinion? Or, do we work to discover ways to provide involvement and experience to those being mentored, the mentees? These are great questions to start the debate on how best to mentor, but let’s focus on ways that address each of these questions.

Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part I - Foundational Experiences

Mentoring men in today’s world should be necessary and mandatory, not optional, to help the next generation of Christian men understand their role in society. The FWCOC youth minister, Rajamail Davis, has had first-hand experience of being mentored by men from FWCOC beginning in seventh grade. Raj can attest that he learned a great deal and was led by various experiences leading to the M&M ministry he now oversees, from making friends with other men to being taught by them in a Bible class and watching as they interacted with their wives during worship. Even the minister in action enhanced Raj’s capacity to be a man with core Christian values.

The M&M ministry provides a way to mentor and share experiences with young men and to aid them in advancing their spiritual views during their developmental years. M&M provides a resource that young fellows can tap into by attending events to learn about a specific topic and have an opportunity to have rich discussions with mentors.

Many kids are visual learners, and they tend to emulate what they admire. They like what they see when men are around other men; they see and understand those behaviors and processes. They can then be open to asking questions and discovering options about how to get to where they want to be. Youngsters must be shown how men behave, so they can at least be aware of it and choose how to act and understand what a man should and should not do.
Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

“Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part I - Foundational Experiences” (Continued)

How are things organized to mentor the youth during an event?

Planning is key to all M&M events. During one of our events, basketball paved the way for young men to listen to event specifics, eat (fuel up), and observe/practice car maintenance (fluids, tire changes). The ministry strives to instill Christian values in all events, so the youth will continue to grow, regardless of the venue. For example, during this event, we asked, “Who wants to bless the food?” There were several young men who raised their hand and volunteered to lead the group in prayer.

How are guest presenters invited to speak and present at an event?

Ministry leaders and volunteers work together as men to provide suggestions and topics for specific events that will allow them to be mentors based on their gifts and talents and to provide first-hand knowledge of a topic. In Part II, our guest presenter for this profiled event, Brother Anthony White, illustrates a Hands-On/Minds-On review of car maintenance with an emphasis on fluids and changing a tire. (To be continued in "Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part II – Hands-On/Minds-On Experiences")

Galatians 3:24, 24 “Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Men Mentoring Men (M&M)
Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Rajamail Davis, Anthony White--Guest Presenter.
Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer.
Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday"
What is the most important thing you need to check when driving a vehicle? This was an intriguing question asked by our guest presenter, brother Anthony White, who provided insights into car maintenance for the M&M ministry. Brother White was instrumental in illustrating a Hands-On/Minds-On experience for our youth.

You may ask yourself, "Why teach the youth to change a tire or check fluids?" After all, today's vehicles are so automated that a car light will come on to warn you when something is wrong. Or in some cases, you get an email or text message notifying you of the status of your vehicle once the light or alarm is triggered. Why bother learning to change a tire or check fluids when you can simply call a vehicle service center or stop by the dealership service department? In fact, some cars even have “run-flat” tires, so why bother? These are valid questions, but you still should understand basic vehicle care, and be aware of the maintenance needs of the vehicle you drive.

During the M&M event, young men had the opportunity to take part in a Minds-On experience, in which they learned how to check fluids and tire pressure and, using a Hands-On approach, they could volunteer to change a tire. One question posed to the group was: What is the most important thing you need to check when you drive a vehicle? The group learned that tire pressure is considered a critical part of car maintenance. Think about it – your car’s fluids may be at correct levels, the gas tank is full (or electric vehicle is at full charge) and everything is working properly; however, the tire pressure could be low, and you don’t realize it or think it can wait. Seriously low tire pressure on a vehicle may lead to a blowout at the wrong time, and even low pressure on run-flat tires can cause problems.

Proper fluid levels are also key to keeping vehicles running at optimum levels. Yes, alarm lights go on to alert the driver, but you should be aware of the meaning of various lights and gauges. So, if your car’s warning lights automatically come on, what should you do? First, you need to check the messages and review the options linked to the message in your vehicle’s manual (or review the email or text received for some vehicles.) While you are checking, it is good be proactive and check fluids or have them checked and have them "topped off" at a vehicle service center.

Other things to do:

- **Mirrors:** Verify that all mirrors are adjusted before you start driving to assure there are no "blind spots," instead of attempting to adjust them during critical drive moments.
- **Seats:** Adjust the driver’s seat controls for your personal comfort and driving plans, especially when traveling long distances.
- **Steering wheel:** For optimal turning radius, both the wheel’s height and distance from the driver are important. Also, learn the rationale for proper hand positions on the wheel, especially if you have a stick shift and must shift gears.
- **Muscle memory:** Knowing the correct positions for park, reverse, neutral and drive on your vehicle should be a "muscle memory," which is an automatic response, so you won’t mix them up during critical situations.

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"Changing the World for the better Everyday"
Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

“Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part II - Hands-On/Minds-On Experiences” (Continued)

What would you say to vehicle owners who think they don’t have time or are not mechanically inclined to do this kind of “stuff”? Some drivers are not mechanically inclined or physically able to work on their vehicles, so they may need to find a service center they trust to do all the work on their vehicle. Also, a number of tire centers offer free tire checks and will fill your tires based on vehicle specifications. So, if you don’t have the tools needed to check tire pressure, consider using these resources. These owners should also know what oil does and why it needs to be changed—and what the average price for an oil change is in their area. If they have a maintenance plan, they should know what it includes, whether or not oil changes are included, and how often they are recommended. Vehicle maintenance can be likened to any other system that needs properly functioning components to work. Still in doubt about the importance of making time for basic car maintenance? Then ask yourself this question: Would you take medication, eat food, or drink beverages without some kind of basic understanding of how these will impact your body's SYSTEMs? It's the same with vehicles, as they are considered mechanical SYSTEMs.

Hands-On/Minds-On

What would the M&M ministry leader say to the men at FWCOC about M&M events? Raz typically works with brothers he knows to brainstorm ideas and suggest events. However, all members are encouraged to suggest topics and need to be willing to assist with any topics they suggest.

M&M mentoring efforts can also include less time-consuming tasks, such as conversations that could inspire the young men to reach their full potential and teach them how to lead. Typical conversations might include discussions about how men should speak like men, walk like men, and how to be upfront and talk with someone face-to-face. Discussions could also include modeling Christian behavior, which includes taking care of your responsibilities in relation to children, being responsible for the tangible items that you are a steward over, and being respectful of women. If you think you don’t have time, take a second look and determine how you can help, even if it is in the form of providing resources (articles, contacts, etc.). Christian men should be on the forefront and lead young men based on core Christian values, instead of letting the world lead and guide them. For example, you should show them what a "man is," instead of allowing various forms of entertainment programming to teach them what a "man is." It is crucial for Christian men to provide events for young men to help them navigate the lifelong journey of being a Christian man. Learning about car maintenance is one way to encourage awareness and fellowship during this journey.

Job 14:1, 1 “Man, who is born of woman, Is short-lived and full of turmoil.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Men Mentoring Men (M&M)
Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Rajaemail Davis, Anthony White--Guest Presenter.
Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving? Do we look at it from a worldly perspective, or from a spiritual standpoint in this season of giving? Why is Thanksgiving such a big holiday? What should Christians be doing during the giving season? These are great questions whose answers are often taken for granted.

Exploring the “Giving Season” Kickoff and the FWCOC Thanksgiving Blessing, What Should I do?

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Thanksgiving is defined as “a public acknowledgment or celebration of divine goodness,” “the act of giving thanks,” or “a prayer expressing gratitude.” These definitions give us some hints about the meaning of the holiday, but what do they tell us about the giving season, which in the US is kicked off by Thanksgiving Day?

In today's society, marketers and retail stores (online and brick and mortar) take advantage of our vulnerability and high-running emotions during this season by promoting Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Giving Tuesday. From the church's perspective, we need to look at this time of year as an opportunity. It is a wonderful opportunity because many people are in the spirit of giving. As Christians, we need to be the biggest givers, and we need to take this opportunity to share the gospel.

The FWCOC annual Thanksgiving Blessing gives us an opportunity to organize and share our message with the community as they show up early to collect a turkey (and fixings) that will allow them to prepare a meal for Thanksgiving.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Fifth Ward Church of Christ

Ministry In-Brief

A Profile of Ministries at Work

Frequently Asked Questions to a Christian Ministry

“Exploring the “Giving Season” Kickoff and the FWCOC Thanksgiving Blessing, What Should I do?” (Continued)

During the event, we provide a way for over 1,000 people who would not normally come to FWCOC to be in our midst. Doing this allows us to share the message of God with them. This year, we had three baptisms on this day. The seeds we plant during the Thanksgiving Blessing could lead to lifelong changes for those ready to hear God’s message. Each year, we have families who bring their kids to church as a way to belong. Some families also come for the turkey and sides—the result is the same, as they are always welcome.

Here are some of the comments from people attending the Thanksgiving Blessing:

“Thanks to all of you!”
“Thank you for helping us!”
“Everybody is so nice, kind, joyful, and uplifting with smiles across the entire event.”
“Everyone is very open and receptive about my needs.”
“Not pushy or anything, just being open to helping.”

Finally, the FWCOC Thanksgiving Blessing event is also a chance for fellowship among members, as we begin the day with a breakfast where we can all share and discuss any ideas or additional insights going into the event. Some members might feel like they don’t have time to stop by, or they may be wondering what else they can do if they can’t take off work for the event. There are many options! Several members have called people to register and stop by the church to pick up a turkey. Members can also donate to the general contribution, as this is another way to aid in the success of the event. Members can also share pictures of the event on social media and other platforms. In other words, there are ways for everyone in the church to get involved. Members can continue to participate in and provide resources to the effort in whatever way they can.

Just remember, we should be welcoming, energetic and in a giving spirit at all times, not only during the giving season. This provides a way for our light to shine. Each of us can make a difference. Sometimes we can be strategic, and the words we say to someone can last a lifetime and help propel them to reach new heights. We may connect with a person at the exact moment when they need to hear such words. As members, we should be able to feel a sense of fulfillment and gratitude by being part of such efforts. It is also important to use whatever we have “in our hands” to help out during the giving season. From tangible to intangible items, all giving is valuable and should not be taken for granted.

1 Timothy 4:4-5, 4 “For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian.
Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer., Barry Gibson--Special Events Coordinator.
Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer.
Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Health and Wellness Ministry


Have you ever thought about the true meaning of “blood pressure?” What do the numbers in a blood pressure reading mean? Which number is most important? Why is it important to control blood pressure? Here, we examine and demystify these questions during our review of blood pressure, to aid in your quest for doing God's work.


Blood pressure regulation impacts everyone, spanning all demographic groups, because controlling it is one thing all of us have in common, since proper blood flow is required for good health. Blood pressure is often taken for granted, and most people do not actually understand what it means. Many people also simply think they are fine, as long as they are not in any pain.

What is blood pressure? The National Institutes of Health define blood pressure as “The force of circulating blood on the walls of the arteries. Blood pressure is taken using two measurements: systolic (measured when the heart beats, when blood pressure is at its highest) and diastolic (measured between heart beats, when blood pressure is at its lowest). Blood pressure is written with the systolic blood pressure first, followed by the diastolic blood pressure (for example 120/80).”

As the definition states, blood pressure is typically denoted by numbers (such as 110/70, 120/80, or 180/110). These numbers represent ranges in blood pressure that healthcare professionals can describe as low, normal, or high.

Which number is more important? The most important number depends on a doctor’s view of the patient's entire situation. In some cases, the systolic pressure may be high, while the diastolic is low. In other cases, both numbers are high. Some doctors look at the "mean pressure" to determine a treatment plan. In general, doctors tend to consider the top (systolic) number to be the focal point. If the top number is too high, chances are the bottom (diastolic) number is also high. While the top number is often the first to be reviewed, both are important.
Why is it important to control blood pressure? There are many consequences of uncontrolled blood pressure. Blood exerts a lot of pressure on the walls of the arteries. If tremendous pressure is put on the arteries for a prolonged time, it will lead to negative effects. Arteries may expand, or even rupture at some point, if blood pressure is not controlled. All that continuous, high-pressure pounding will cause problems down the line. Think about blowing up a balloon; as you blow, it continues to expand, and you don't know exactly when it might burst. If you maintain and control your blood pressure, the arteries can handle a certain level of pressure, an amount that is considered “normal.”

Blood pressure also impacts other areas of the body, such as the eyes, kidneys, and brain. If blood pressure is uncontrolled, it can disrupt certain bodily functions and lead to stroke or heart issues, which are critical concerns. The blood vessels in the brain are not as large as those in the rest of the body. If they are consistently under excessive pressure, these vessels will rupture and a brain bleed, also known as a Hemorrhagic stroke, may occur.

How important is limiting the amount of salt in your diet for helping to control blood pressure? Very Important!

Salt tends to cause fluid retention in the body. If you have more fluid in the body than you should, it raises the blood pressure and forces the heart to work harder. If you can keep your body in balance (in a state of equilibrium or homeostasis), its systems can work together and keep blood pressure in a normal range, as defined by your physician. When fluid levels are controlled, there is also less of a burden on the kidneys. However, when excess fluid is retained, the heart must work very hard and, oftentimes, blood will pool in the ankles (this also can be caused by certain medications). For these reasons, it is critical to manage salt consumption. (To be continued in "Blood Pressure - Who, What, When, How, and Where - Part II.")

Acts 3:16, 16 “And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Health and Wellness.
Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley, Cordelia Bevel.
Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer.
Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.
Many people often wonder why their blood pressure is checked before various health screenings. What is the purpose? They say they feel “fine.” From dental visits and annual doctor checkups to clinic visits, blood pressure readings continue to be a major part of vital screenings.

**Blood Pressure - Who, What, When, How and Where - Part II**

Sometimes, if your blood pressure is too high and out of control, medical professionals may refuse to treat you for the planned purpose of your visit. They may route you to a different area, or even send you to the emergency room. This should be a key item when thinking about blood pressure and why it is oftentimes called the “silent killer.” Even if you feel great right now, you should still have your blood pressure checked. Another beneficial way to understand blood pressure is to hear about it from a medical professional with practical experience. After all, we typically learn and grow from experiences (positive or negative.) The following questions were asked of a medical professional with the required education and licenses, practical knowledge, and experience about the importance of monitoring blood pressure.

**What are some common misconceptions about blood pressure that you have noticed in your career?** Most people don’t really understand what blood pressure means, or what it does to their body. I’ve found that, if you explain the repercussions of high blood pressure to patients, you get a more positive response from them. So, if a doctor tells you that your blood pressure is up and that you need a prescription for medication, you should take it a step further and ask questions. Otherwise, you may start taking the medication and then find that you don’t feel good (or have side effects), which may cause you to stop taking the medication, since your blood pressure has gone down. Or, you may think you only need to take the medication on days when your blood pressure is up. This is not the proper way to take the medication. You must continue taking it to maintain normal levels. If not, your blood pressure may go back up, and it will probably be higher the next time it is checked. Before you know it, your kidneys will be stressed, which could lead to a need for dialysis.

You should also communicate with your physician and ask them to tell you everything you need to know about the medication and what to expect. Let me repeat: Do not simply take the prescription without asking questions. If your doctor doesn’t emphasize the importance of lowering your blood pressure, then ask and don’t make assumptions. Taking care of your blood pressure can be likened to not taking a bath. If you stop taking baths, you will quickly see the effects. Likewise, if you don’t monitor your blood pressure or take your prescribed blood pressure medication, don’t eat the right foods, and don’t exercise, it will eventually lead to noticeable external problems. Blood pressure tends to be mysterious, but it truly is a cause and effect relationship.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Health and Wellness Ministry
“Blood Pressure - Who, What, When, How and Where - Part II” (Continued)

Should I rely on Internet articles to understand blood pressure? Most people today tend to search for information and read articles online. However, some older people don’t have access to this information, because they don’t use computers. Considering that older people typically have increased blood pressure problems, and that medical professionals are oftentimes too busy to provide complete explanations, it is important for these older patients to receive correct information that explains the issues surrounding high blood pressure. This problem can be described as a generation gap in health care. Again, patients need to have access to information and research pertaining to blood pressure, including diet and exercise. It isn’t good to rely only on medication to take care of high blood pressure—patients need to review the research and know what they can do to help themselves. Reliable Internet sources (including websites hosted by hospitals; medical and dental schools; and federal government agencies, like NIH.gov) provide lots of information—from case studies to various wellness plan options—that will help patients focus on their blood pressure goals. Again, I suggest that patients of all ages do their research, read articles, and ask their doctor questions to ensure they get the correct information.

What would be the most valuable thing you could tell members about blood pressure?
First, the major ethnicity of our congregation is people of color. Probably 99% of our African-American members are plagued with blood pressure problems (both diagnosed and undiagnosed), or they have close family members with blood pressure problems. I would warn them that leaving blood pressure unmonitored impacts the body. Some problems can be fixed with diet and exercise, but others may be hereditary and require medication to maintain normal blood pressure. I would also tell our members that so much happens because of our lifestyles. We need to become more active and to watch what we eat by staying away from the so-called “good stuff.” Instead, we should focus on the “nutritious stuff.”

Our bodies are temples of God, and we are responsible for our bodies so that we can help others. If you are an African American and you know that hypertension “runs in your family,” you need to become better educated about this medical condition and find ways to control it.

Job 28: 12-13, 12 “But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? Man does not know its value, Nor is it found in the land of the living.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
How important is proper nutrition to our physical bodies? Should we be on a 24/7 diet, continually trying to lose weight? What are some effective ways to help maintain our physical wellness so we can serve in the capacity that God wants? These are essential questions that some take for granted, but they’re critical if we want to maintain our physical wellness to do God’s work.

The Contrast Between a Nutritionist and Dietitian, Demystified. Anyone with access to various resources on nutrition can call him or herself a nutritionist, including specialists who work at health food stores; where nutritional supplements are sold, and educated individuals with nutritional science and dietetics degrees.

On the other hand, a dietitian has a four-year degree in nutrition or has fulfilled the required prerequisite courses at an accredited university to become a dietitian. Then, they must complete an internship through a university or some type of service that is accredited by the American Dietetic Association. An intense internship can take six months to two years or even longer based on the requirements. During the internship, they learn about all aspects of nutrition including maternal and child health, food management, clinical nutrition (pediatrics and adults), and school nutrition, just to name a few. The internship allows for Hands-On/Minds-On involvement in specialized nutrition areas, all while students are completing assignments and coursework. Upon completion, students become certified or registered in the country and can obtain a state license to practice as a registered dietitian. This allows them to assist patients with nutritional problems and to recommend various dietary plans.

The dietitian’s role within the health and wellness ministry is to participate in health and wellness fairs and to assist if someone has issues with their nutritional plan or needs additional nutritional or dietary resources. Perhaps someone is expecting a child or has children and needs access to programs and resources, or maybe someone is not eating well. In these cases, the dietitian can teach them how to prepare a meal and fix a plate that is balanced and to make healthy food choices. (Part I Continued on next page)
Listed below are some effective ways to help maintain your physical wellness so that you can serve our God effectively.

**Diets provide a temporary boost.** Understand that the phrase, "I'm on a diet," should mean that this diet is a boost—and only temporary. However, your mindset should be on lifetime food management as prescribed by a dietitian. Ask yourself: How can I maintain my weight loss? What types of food can I eat? What is necessary, and what isn’t necessary?

**Lifetime plan.** Follow a plan that you can maintain for a lifetime, including what types of foods you consume for meals and snacks. For instance, you should eat at least one fruit or vegetable with each meal or snack. Work to develop a mindset where you eat more fruits and vegetables instead of making the highlight of each meal a huge portion of meat. Be practical and think of this as a requirement, so you can make sure you have the mindset to include fruits or vegetables with each meal. In short, be cognizant of what you eat, be practical, and remember the requirements for proper food management.

**Water.** Think about what you drink. Water is an ingredient in many beverages, but they also have other additives. Instead of choosing sugary or diet beverages, drink water. If you don’t like water, try various types of water (carbonated or fruit-infused) to satisfy your taste buds. Drinking water is one of the easiest ways to cut calories, so take it one glass at a time. Remember, water is an essential part of a sensible daily diet.

For long-term nutrition plans and wellness, consider juicing and emulsifying as an added benefit, which will be the focus of Part II, The Nutritional Value of Juicing and Emulsifying to Achieve (or Exceed) and Maintain Your Wellness Goals.

**Genesis 1:29-30,** 29 "Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30 and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so." *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.
**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Aleatha Draine.
**Ministry In-Brief Administrator:** Karl Spencer.
**Location:** Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
What do the terms “juicing” and “emulsifying” mean? According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, juicing means “to extract the juice of or juice; the extractable fluid contents of cells or tissues,” and emulsifying means “to disperse in an emulsion.” These are contrasting definitions that can apply to the foods we eat, but what does this have to do with nutrition and overall wellness? In this “In-Brief,” we explore various options using these terms to help you understand another way to use fruits and vegetables to enhance your nutritional plan.

The Nutritional Value of Juicing and Emulsifying

Should I juice or emulsify? Let’s explore the results of these techniques. Everyone knows what juice is and that we can buy juices from a variety of places. Juice can be derived from water-rich fruits and vegetables ranging from oranges and grapefruits to kale and beets. Basically, juicing calls for simply squeezing the plant to extract its juice. In fact, juices are easy to mass produce, so these products tend to be rather commercialized and convenient. If you prefer, you can buy a juicer and make your own lime juice, for example. After you extract the juice, you’ll be left with the plant’s pulp and fiber remains, and you may have questions about what to do with them.

Emulsifying not only creates juice, it takes the process a step further. You will need an emulsifier, a specialized blender that breaks down and liquefies ingredients. If you put sliced vegetables – such as carrots, squash, kale, cauliflower, and beets – and water into an emulsifier, you’ll get a liquid mixture. Based on the settings you choose, the liquid can be as thick as a porridge (meaning it will have lots of fiber) or completely broken down with the consistency of water.
Which is better, juicing or emulsifying?

Actually, the question should be: Which technique helps to provide long-term nutritional wellness? The answer: It depends on how you juice and what you include in your juicing recipes. For practical purposes, emulsifying always wins over juicing, because it provides both juice and a higher level of fiber. You can then decide how much of a breakdown you want. A good rule of thumb is to emulsify, as it breaks down all the plant’s components so that nothing is wasted, and you still have juice as well as the fiber option. If you don’t want to include the plant’s fiber in your juicing, try adding various other ingredients that contain fiber, such as flax seeds.

Getting Started or Advancing Your Juicing Efforts

Should you consider relying on juice and not eating fruits and vegetables? The long-term answer is "no." Still, juicing will add variety to your routine while helping you to meet the recommended daily allowance of vegetables and fruits. Some people enjoy vegetable juice in the morning with their breakfast for added nutrition and then have a smoothie at lunch or midday to put some pep in their step.

When juicing vegetables, the best way to start the process is to purchase fresh ingredients, wash them, and prep them (blanching is suggested). Then, freeze the vegetables in various portions, so that you can combine them in your emulsifier. It’s best to do the prep work ahead of time, to make daily life easier. You can follow a similar process for fruit, but high-quality frozen fruit is more readily available than vegetables, so there may be less work for you. If you do emulsify, purchase organically grown fruits and vegetables, as they are free from additives. Once you have your ingredients prepped, you can select what you want from the freezer, add water, and put the contents into an emulsifier – in less than five minutes, you’ll be ready to taste.

Finding a good place to purchase fresh juice may be another choice for those weighing the cost benefit value of their juicing efforts. Organic juices (or smoothies) can also be purchased, as they are readily available from a variety of places. As with any nutritional plan changes, consult your registered dietitian (or, in some cases, a physician for special diets) before adding to or enhancing your nutritional options.

1 Corinthians 10:31, 31 “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Health and Wellness.
Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley, Aleatha Draine.
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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Why do you go to church? Do we take the church for granted as we get into a routine and attend services? If our weekly services and classes become routine, some may begin to attend as "just another weekly event." To avoid this, let's consider the benefits of church including “Who is the Church for?” First and foremost, God wants everyone to be saved, so the church is for everyone. Some believe the church should provide tangible benefits they can see or touch; otherwise, they think they don't need the church because they're already in control of their lives. Christians understand that God is in control and recognize how sin impacts the world. God has created a plan for us and knows what is best for us. Still, some try to do it on their own, because they don't understand what the church is all about.

God designed the church to be a family of individuals working on their personal salvation to get back to Him. All families have varying levels of dysfunction, and, yes, there's also dysfunction in the church. That's because members are human and "grow" through experiences in their quest to please God and maintain their overall wellness. If we see the church as a wellness center, we can think of needing spiritual "checkups" to keep and maintain our spiritual wellness. The church helps strengthen us through the spiritual lessons and guidance it provides. For example, "be well" is a simple blessing we often say to others, but what does it mean?

As Christians, "be well" applies to more than our physical health, it also has a direct connection to our spiritual well-being. Even if you get to the point where you think you have it together, you must maintain your spirit. This is similar to our need for food, water and oxygen. We can go without food and water for a few days, but our body's systems will slowly start to fail without oxygen. So, think of the church as the wellness center that provides food and water for the spirit and of the Word of God as the "consistent" oxygen source we need to maintain our spiritual wellness.

After all, Christians are the light of the world. If non-believers don't notice this light shining within us, they won't see the benefits of attending church services (and related classes/sessions and events.) (Stay tuned for The Church as a Wellness Center, Part II - Practical ways we can make use of the church as a wellness center)

Acts 9:31, 31 “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Fifth Ward Church of Christ

Ministry In-Brief

A Profile of Ministries at Work

Frequently Asked Questions to a Christian Ministry

“The Church as a Wellness Center, Part II - Practical ways we can make use of the Church as a Wellness Center”

The Church is designed to fulfill our needs and maintain our spiritual growth and development. The Word of God is the method you should use to "water," refresh, and sometimes restore your spirit. Spiritual food and checkups come in the form of services, sessions, and classes on a weekly basis as we take this journey. Think of the Church as a wellness center that you need to maintain your overall spiritual health. It’s not about being flawed or thinking that something is so wrong with you that you cannot be helped. It’s about understanding that everyone encounters issues or forks in the road, and the wellness center is here to help prevent, maintain, or treat these experiences so you can grow. By going to the wellness center, you can help to prevent these challenges from overwhelming your entire life’s mission and interfering with God’s plan for your life.

Show up, Stay Connected and Serve. The main way to use the church as a wellness center is to show up with a focused mind, ready to connect in ways that will strengthen your spirit. Even for those who may be providentially hindered, there are ways for outreach as members communicate across the brotherhood and bring various spiritual connections to you, especially in this digital age. If you don’t show up or stay connected, how can you expect the wellness center to help you? You need it to help you maintain (and in some cases find) direction and recognize direct correlations to God’s Word. This is similar to working with an exercise trainer or a dietician, both of whom impact our physical wellness. If you don’t show up for training or follow-up on nutritional advice, then you have not done your part. The same is true when you allow God to order your steps and understand what it means to be faithful, responsive, and thankful. You should become involved by finding out how you can use your gifts and talents to support and expand the Church’s efforts. Becoming involved includes helping during services, sessions, and events, or in ways that make an impact—yet may not be totally visible to all—to help the Church grow and spread the Good News. Whatever you decide to do, make sure it’s something you want to do and that it fulfills your need to serve. This will provide another way to keep your spirit strong and help maintain your spiritual mindset.

Prayer, Praise and Fellowship. Prayers from the righteous allow you to stay connected and in "the zone" during both positive and negative experiences. You may feel that prayers or praising God are not important, but the prayers of the righteous prevail, and God continues to order our steps. Praising God, through spiritual songs and hymns, helps to strengthen our spirit in ways that keep the Devil, choice words, and/or actions "at bay." Being involved in service and praising God also allows you to learn (or review/practice) songs. You can then "have your own concerts" using spiritual songs that continue to uplift your spirit while praising God, whenever and wherever you can. After all, where two or more are gathered together in God’s name, His presence is in their midst.

In closing, let’s remember to show up, stay connected, use our God-given gifts, and always bring our "A game" of consciousness with us. This will help you to pray and understand ways to discern the foils and traps of the Devil, and it will provide guidance for staying on a path of righteousness. If your mindset continues to hear righteousness, you will develop inherent thinking skills that far exceed the norm, as you will understand what it means for God to be a part of your life. You will be surrounded by others who understand your struggles and challenges, and you will have opportunities to ask for prayer and help while on your Christian journey.

Matthew 18:20, 20 "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Why is a wellness mindset important? Do we fail to focus on ways to maintain our overall health and wellness because we are too busy working? Do we kick the can down the road thinking we can deal with it later? These are essential questions that impact all humans, whether or not they are aware of a wellness mindset.

The Health and Wellness Ministry maintains a keen focus on these aspects of being well. One objective of the Health and Wellness Ministry is to provide ways to maintain a wellness mindset. Some would say that this should be an inherent part of our lives, but people find it difficult to maintain a consistent mindset for things that could have a positive impact on their overall state of wellness and that are within their control. One key area of the ministry’s work is striving to alert members about what they should be doing.

In particular, during Sunday worship services, we teach members to be alert about their health and wellness. When someone becomes sick or needs medical assistance, nurses, doctors, and people who can perform CPR are available, and a host of these individuals are involved in our Health and Wellness Ministry. As a Health and Wellness Ministry, we look after the members each week, asking how they are and attempting to review their status. We try to make sure everyone knows what to do if someone becomes ill, as this is a time when members need someone from the ministry to assist. The ministry is trained in the skills needed in a medical emergency.

Some of the best advice from the Health and Wellness Ministry is for people to get their checkup each year rather than ignoring their checkup date. A person’s interior physical state (cells, tissues, organs, and body systems) will eventually have an impact on their overall wellness state. Just because everything looks good on the outside does not mean that there are no internal problems; therefore, people should always strive to know their wellness state and not ignore their problem areas. In addition to its focus on maintaining a wellness mindset, an extension of the ministry includes fitness classes. Look out for our special focus on wellness (physical and spiritual) as we open our summer activities, and join us in getting fit by focusing on the mind, spirit, and body.

3 John 1:2, “Dear friend, Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Health and Wellness Ministry. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
A Profile of Ministries at Work

Employment Ministry
“Insights, Part I”

Considering how technology has changed our lives, are skills (soft, practical, and technical) important nowadays? What about reviewing employment opportunities? Do jobs last for an entire career? Are referrals important? These are critical questions for anyone working for an organization—questions for which the employment ministry can provide direction and additional insight.

Employment—what a fascinating word. What is the purpose of employment? Is it to make money? Is it to be busy and stay on a job for life? To some people, the purpose of employment may change, but the purpose of the employment ministry is clear: “To assist church and community members in securing employment by supplying job leads and resources in the form of professional development.”

In fulfilling this purpose, the ministry links community partners, as well as other hiring organizations, to the community and church members. Typical community partners include non-profit organizations that provide job training and listings. The employment ministry collaborates with such partners using information and announcements listed on the partner corner on the FWCOC website. The ministry also allows interested job seekers to submit a survey for specific information, ranging from professional job searches to help with budgeting.

If someone has a job but does not have all the certifications or training that they need, they can get additional information from the employment ministry regarding possibilities. Some partners have access to certifications and can provide those certifications to attendees. The ministry also offers options for interviewing skills, resume building, and referrals. (Continued in Part II, “When does your career mindset start? Insights from a Member”)

Colossians 3:23-24, 23-24 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Employment Ministry. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): David Willis, Alicia Brown. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Employment Ministry

“When does your career mindset start? Insights from a Member, Part II”

How do we determine when our career should start? If we work backwards to show how we achieved our career, maybe we can gain some insight and help others in their journeys. One FWCOC member has some insights that may provide a perspective into launching a career using a backward design (How did I get here?) approach. This member wants to lift up others to join in and provide career insights for the younger generation and also requests that if you want to know who this member is, you follow up with an email to the In-Brief Administrator. Emailing will allow you to take action on what you have read.

Career Insights from a Member

What do you do? I am a small business owner running two businesses: one in information technology (IT) solutions and one in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) K-18 professional development and research. It’s a weird career combination, but it merges my education, vision and mindset.

What does the market look like for what you do? Let me answer this question by sharing the number of emails and phone calls I receive daily about securing a contract or whether I know of anyone that has certain skills. On an average, I get five calls and 20 email messages a day about different opportunities, but some days it’s over 20 calls and 50 emails about various jobs or contracts.

What is your advice to people that want to follow their interests and vision? Interests and visions are always useful in order to keep you motivated, but you must be realistic and understand that you may have to make sacrifices until your plans materialize. You can also follow your interests or vision as a hobby until something pops up, but don’t let it consume you and lead you away from God. Just because you understand your vision doesn’t mean that others will be on board immediately. You may be years ahead of the idea, but you need to decide how you are going to maintain the financial aspects of your life until everyone catches up with you.

What do you think helped your career mindset? Growing up in the Church of Christ, keeping God first in everything, having God’s favor, understanding Bible-based lessons and strong parental support and encouragement helped to focus my mindset. I often say that “birds fly into my head frequently” to help guide and remind me. I listen, keep an open mind, allow myself to be guided and act on the best opportunities, all while using rational and critical thought processes to vet options.

Of course, I had valuable education and experiences along the way, but putting God first has allowed me to look back and understand the "forks" in the road. Also, being challenged with rigor in school early on and experiencing the natural world to garner an understanding of it and apply critical thinking to my curiosity added to my mindset. Rote memorization is easy, but applying concepts and knowledge to the natural world helped me understand how things work.

Any regrets on your career moves? Not really. I love what I do. If you allow God to order your steps, there are no wrong decisions. Sometimes you might think a decision is wrong, but each decision allows you to grow. You build upon previous decisions, and you keep making decisions. So, looking back, I believe that if I had missed the positive and negative experiences that have allowed me to grow, I would not have been shaped into who I am today.

What would you tell a young person trying to decide on a career? There are a vast number of career options for students. From an employer’s perspective, if employees have a combination of key skills, including the ability to use rational thinking, solve problems, act civilly and think critically across scenarios, they stand out; they are not "rote" learners. The majority of job candidates have the technical skills and degrees required, but unique candidates have the skills that set them apart and will ultimately prove to be the most valuable to an employer. Students should strive for classes that will prepare them for their college or post-secondary endeavors. Make sure you understand each subject’s concepts and content instead of focusing on rote memorization to get through an exam. It is true that not everybody goes to college, but everyone will need some type of job to earn an honest wage. So, when the right opportunity presents itself, you must act. You also must have the faith, courage and ability to screen opportunities and turn them down, regardless of the conditions, if they do not fit your goals. As you do this, understand the consequences of accepting or rejecting said opportunities. Ultimately, in any career situation, turn to God to order your steps as you make decisions.

Acts 18:9-10. 9 “And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; 10 for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Employment Ministry. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): David Willis, Alicia Brown. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Men’s Ministry

“Retreat - Teaching, Mentoring and Fellowship, Part I”

What is a retreat? Is it simply a time to get away, relax, and have fun? What happens after the retreat? The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word “retreat” as “a period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation, study, or instruction under a director.”

One of the events held by the men’s ministry is the men’s retreat. This retreat is designed to allow Christian men to pause, take time out from their everyday lives, listen, refresh, and fellowship. It gives them the opportunity to learn and understand that men are impactful, effective, necessary, and expected by God to maintain the upstanding characteristics of integrity, honor, dignity, foresight, discernment, and respect.

The purpose of the Men's Ministry is to encourage the spiritual growth and maturity of young men aged 25–45 through teaching, mentorship, modeling, and fellowship. One way the ministry achieves this goal is through a men’s retreat. During the 2018 retreat, 44 men from the FWCOC participated in sessions, dinner discussions, and fellowship. This was a memorable experience for the ministry leaders because it reinforced the commitment of the FWCOC to build better men. A key aspect of the retreat involved attending sessions at the Brotherhood of Men Conference. The conference sessions were very informative and spiritually uplifting, and helped the men understand where they are and where they need to be. In one of the breakout sessions, the facilitators talked about making an inventory of our gifts. When we use these gifts professionally, we call them “talents,” but when we use them for God, they are considered gifts. For example, if I am good at organizing things at my workplace or negotiating deals, then I am expected to use that gift for God. Sometimes other people can recognize our gifts more easily than we can. Our job is to think about how other people might recognize our gifts and be ready when they reveal them to us.

During the retreat, the men had the opportunity to understand the important role of Christian men and realize that we are impactful, effective, and necessary leaders. When we neglect our duties or ignore our responsibilities, the Church of Christ, as described in the Bible, will either cease to exist or change into something that is not of solid doctrine. If we want the Church to survive and be biblically correct, then we must become involved in the church. That could mean serving in worship services or capturing visual scenes (pictures and video) to document the church’s history; either way, you must make the best use of the gifts that God has given you. If you don’t, they might fade away. (Continued in Part II: Retreat - Teaching, Mentoring and Fellowship)

Genesis 1:26-27, NKJV Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Men’s Ministry. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Herman Brown, William Hamilton. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center – Men’s Retreat Extension.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
What makes a better man for the cause of Christ? Is it avoiding crises, challenges or disappointments? Trying to be good stewards and being held accountable? Meeting together in groups to discuss matters that are not commonly talked about? These are great points, and they were essential during discussions at the men’s retreat. Leaders of the Men’s Ministry are grateful that the men at FWCOC were committed to attending conference meetings and sessions. Allowing men to experience empowering meetings and sessions provides a way to share opinions across the brotherhood. Brothers share what has occurred in their lives to show that no one is immune to the problems, experiences, traps and pitfalls devised by the Devil. We all live in society and have things going on, but it’s all about how we handle things. Just because someone appears all prepped and groomed doesn’t mean that this person has no issues to deal with. We all have pluses and minuses in our lives, and the Devil is constantly trying to chase and bait us. Brotherhood meetings and sessions provide ways for brothers to come together and learn to be better men and leaders so the church can continue to grow.

Typical questions to stimulate discussions and challenge each other include the following: "Where are you in your life right now?" "Where do you want to go?" "Where are you supposed to be?" Addressing these driving questions provides opportunities for men to experience rich discussions from varying perspectives. By asking such questions, we avoid being tricked by the whirls of the Devil. We become open-minded, hearing and understanding what others have to say. All men are exposed to similar kinds of problems, disappointments or abuses at some point in their lives. Sharing information in a positive environment can help others prepare and circumvent such events. During small group discussions, men receive reinforcement and guidance to help prevent: the negative influence of other people; "tapes that play in the mind" from past experiences; and the Devil from negatively impacting their lives.

Ultimately, how we handle experiences and situations is directly connected to our stewardship of everything that God owns. Good stewardship creates a pathway to the understanding that we will be held accountable for what we have been given access to. If we hold the mindset that everything belongs to God and we need to take care of it, our approach to both possessions and relationships will flow toward God. Even as we carry this mindset and try to be good stewards, problems will arise; oftentimes we will be faced with decisions that lead to varying paths. We must always remember to go through an experience without "owning" any misguided events or setbacks from the Devil.

Matthew 5:14-16, "14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

Ministry: Men’s Ministry. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Herman Brown, William Hamilton. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center – Men’s Retreat Extension.
Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

“Model, Relay and Encourage”

How important are men in the church? Is baptism a prerequisite for understanding the different roles and duties in the church? These are some of the key questions that Men Mentoring Men can help address. We like to think about M&M as a continuous relay race, where older men prepare the younger generation to receive the “baton.”

Men Mentoring Men is a ministry for older men to mentor younger men by modeling self-control and dignity, relaying mindsets for integrity, and encouraging soundness in faith through support. From playing basketball and flag football to attending boxing matches, we lead various outings that show men how to communicate and act in different settings.

The young men will come as a group and be part of the sporting or social event, where the main goal is to talk, mentor, and connect with them. This allows them to be in the company of other men and experience a Christian-based view of masculinity: one that provides a spiritual perspective on how they should act in society, at home, and around women. These events provide opportunities for the older men to connect with the younger men and lead them into the next training class, where they will learn about serving in the church, including working around the communion table, learning to pray, and participating in service in general.

In other sessions, the guys can form bonds as they talk about practical issues and tackle everyday tasks. For example, conversations on how to deal with police officers, how to tie a tie, change a flat tire, and ways to maintain personal hygiene (wearing deodorant, brushing teeth, bathing, etc.) - things that are not often talked about and that we tend to take for granted. Sometimes young men don’t have a consistent male presence at home. Through the M&M ministry, they get the opportunity to learn valuable life lessons and skills from other men. We provide a way to fill that void and be there for them as brothers that they can learn from or talk to. We keep in touch; a mentor is never more than a message, email or a phone call away. In the end, it’s not just about attending events, bonding, and having fun; it’s a way to connect to Christian living and follow God’s word.

Titus 2:2, 6-8 “2 Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. 6 Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. 7 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Men Mentoring Men. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Rajamail Davis. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Think back to when you were young (it has been longer for some of us than for others!). How did you learn how to act in Church? Were you taught? Did you observe others? Or, were you perhaps not completely aware of what you should be doing? Is it important for children to understand how to act in Church and to learn the meaning and importance of fellowship and attending Church? These are all great points to consider, and we have a way to address them: Bible Hour.

What is Bible Hour? To some, Bible Hour is what they think of as a children’s Church service. The purpose of Bible Hour is to teach our youth, ages 6 to 12 (though this may also include younger children), the principles of God's word on a level that they can understand. We also teach them how to worship and the importance of worshiping God. Bible Hour is held in the resource center at the same time as the morning worship service.

How can we teach young children what Church is? Do they really understand where they are taken each week? Bible Hour provides a pathway for youth as they begin to understand how to act in Church as they grow into their teenage years. We often wonder if it is reasonable to expect kids to know how to act in certain circumstances, and we tend to make assumptions that they will know how to act. Bible Hour provides a way, using a spiritual approach, to let kids be kids, while also providing them with activities, games and bible-based lessons. During Bible Hour, there is a lot of movement, activity, and high energy. Lessons are geared toward children’s needs and attention spans. Activity sheets and games are also included, to provide various ways of teaching important biblical principles. Sometimes, our teenagers attend to act as chaperones, as do parents who want to understand how they can become more involved in Bible Hour.

One of the positive aspects for Church leaders is that Bible Hour allows leaders to really get to know the kids. When leaders see the kids outside of Bible Hour, they have a more personal connection, and the kids begin to see the leaders as mentors. As they get older (ages 13 to 19), they continue to build on what they experienced during Bible Hour. This includes forming relationships and getting to know each other, and sitting together during bible classes (sessions) and worship services.

Ultimately, Bible Hour is beneficial for long-term personal growth and sustainability, as it is through these early sessions that the youth have experiences with spiritual leaders and mentors to assist them as they continue to grow during their Christian journey.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Bible Hour. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Rajamail Davis, Portia Davis. Ministry In-Brief Administrator: Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
What if young girls had access to a never-ending relationship base throughout their Christian journey? How do you think they would use it? Would they use it only in times of need, or would they use it in good times as well?

"Be a light for all to see." Glow is a FWCOC ministry focused on girls from 8 to 12 years old. The emphasis of this ministry is on a mentoring program to encourage and guide these youngsters spiritually. The program's purpose is for adult women of God to build relationships with girls in order to support them along their Christian journey and to help them to grow spiritually and emotionally into mature Christians (young ladies of God.) Different activities range from making prayer boxes to having lunches or going on outings. For some events, each girl can bring a friend for encouragement and to enable the girl to be a light to non-members.

Glowing is a ministry that focuses on helping teenaged girls and young ladies to build relationships with older women who can share their experiences and teach the young ladies. Establishing these relationships and strengthening these bonds helps the young ladies grow and gives them trusted people they can call upon when they go to college and beyond. Glowing also fills in the gaps for elements that may not be optimal in certain situations. From sleepovers and confidential conversations to back-to-school events, the main emphasis of this ministry is on supporting young ladies in and out of school and providing them with good Christians for them to contact in times of need who will give them valuable Christian advice. This type of personal hotline support also provides an alternative for young women when talking to a parent may not be their best option, whether it's because they don't feel comfortable discussing a particular topic with their parents, or for any other reason. When the mentors in our program follow up with the young ladies, it gives them a way to stay in contact with them during their journey towards adulthood. They can communicate with each other through good times, disappointments, or unexpected consequences, and the younger women can be reassured that things do get better and that they should not let challenges take them out of the game. Yes, they may be going through something difficult at that particular time; however the sun does eventually shine, and we will continue to support them throughout their Christian journey.

What do girls think about these ministries? "Get to meet new people." "Very refreshing." "We can talk about real things and not sugarcoat it, but it is all Christ-like." "They are not going to criticize—they are going to talk to us and listen to help guide us along." "When I first came to Fifth Ward, I was wondering how I could get involved. As a millennial, being involved with Glowing was very beneficial to my growth." Thus, overall, building relationships between the younger and older women in the congregation is the key to strengthening everyone’s Christian journey.

Matthew 5:16 “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Glow and Glowing. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Glow - Montra Adams, Yolanda Bailey, Nicole Frazier. Glowing - Tanya Patche, Felicia Pichon. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
What is a Bible Class? How can it benefit Christians, regardless of the amount of time they have been in the church? How are Bible Classes, as experiences, linked to personal growth and professional development sessions? These are some of the key questions that this In-Brief demystifies.

If you think about a Bible Class as a series of connected session experiences, then it becomes part of your ongoing personal growth and professional development for performing your work as a Christian. The Education Ministry is for all ages and encompasses teaching and mentoring classes. Attendance will strengthen your approach to life’s journey and aid your overall outreach efforts. The Education Ministry’s mission and overview for Bible Classes is: "To prepare our students, from the scriptures, to become faithful, functioning members of the body of Christ." We want to give them the tools to make correct life choices based on the Bible. We cannot give them all the answers, but we can teach them how to find those answers for themselves.

Attending Bible Class provides a structured way to study God’s Word. A life without the filling presence of God’s Word inside you can be likened to a steel can being left in a closed room while external forces suck all the air out of the room, creating a vacuum. Similarly, as external forces apply pressure and hit your inner psyche, you become just like the can—bent, reshaped and, in some cases, morphed into something different. If you don’t have anything in you, the pressures from outside can bend and warp your internal well-being and lead you further from God. Bible Class allows you to gain knowledge, hear experiences, and learn additional ways to combat the forces of evil.

2 Timothy 2:15 “15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Education. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Ed Redeaux, Shirlette Milton. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Does God speak to us? First and foremost, what does “speak” mean? Merriam-Webster defines speak as: to utter words or articulate sounds with the ordinary voice; to make a written statement; to make known in writing; to indicate by other than verbal means. These are great definitions to show the vast ways to define this term. However, if we want to truly understand how God speaks to us, it is important to analyze the various possibilities.

Christians believe that God speaks to us through his Word, the Bible. If we are honest with ourselves before we make major decisions, our minds assess the situation. We then realize that something is going on and inherent prompting pushes us to make a decision. What speaks to us in our mind comes from things that we have read or heard, which then become a part of our overall learning experience for continued guidance. We need to determine where this guidance is coming from. Our ultimate answer must come from the Word of God.

Our conscience speaks to us during major decisions, and if our thoughts come from God’s Word, then God really is speaking to us. This should not be mystic. We need to be careful to discern the source of guidance because our conscience is based on what we put in it. For example, you may not want your child going to places that you don't think are appropriate for a child to visit, but how did you come to this conclusion? By experience? Have you seen places where people do things that shouldn't be done? Or is this conclusion based on a moral code that comes from the Bible? Ultimately, if you use the Bible to define your moral code, you are absorbing inaudible written words that define how you live. As such, we can say that God is speaking to us (Continued in Part II -- Does God Speak to Us, Practical Approaches).

**Romans 10:17** "17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ."

**1 Thessalonians 2:13** “13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.” *(Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))*

**Ministry:** Frequently asked questions to a Christian. **Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. **Location:** Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Fifth Ward Church of Christ

Ministry In-Brief

A Profile of Ministries at Work

Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry

“Does God Speak to Us? -- Part II, Practical Approaches”

It is natural to think of speaking as a form of communication that uses sound, sight and/or touch. At some point, these forms of communication can become like tapes or embedded recordings that play in our heads, often at varying times. If you expand speaking to include prompting and understanding how to make decisions from a source that you can discern, then you can begin to understand conversations with God.

Discern is an interesting term. Merriam-Webster defines it as “to detect with the eyes; to detect with senses other than vision; to recognize or identify as separate and distinct.” How should we discern the source of words, voices or promptings? If a believer tells you, "God said I shouldn't be in a relationship with this person," what is this statement based on? Did the believer read the Word and understand that being unequally yoked will not work? Or did the believer receive a prompting or feeling, and the Holy Spirit sent a warning through prompting, emotions or another person?

The Bible says not to be unequally yoked with nonbelievers. That's a direct link to the Word, but is it God speaking through His Word to this person's dilemma? If a person claims to have heard God's voice telling them to do something, was it really God? Why do you think it was God? What was the conversation? Was it the same conversation you would have with a living, breathing human being on Earth? What was it based on? Were you dreaming? Were you walking and pondering in the wilderness? Do you have a basis for linking it to the Word of God? These are all questions to help discern what is actually occurring if you think God is speaking to you and the Holy Spirit is guiding you.

Faithful Christians should be able to discern internal and external interactions and always strive to prevail over interactions that stem from the arch evil, commonly called the devil (Continued in Part III: Does God Speak to Us? Moving Beyond Discernment).

2 Corinthians 6:14 “14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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Moving beyond discernment. What does this mean? Should we wait for God to speak to us before attempting to move and do something after a decision? Are there any decisions that are incorrect? These are all questions that should be understood as you plan to move beyond discernment. In everyday life, some people want confirmation for key decisions as being right or wrong. The context is still what God is giving us and are we listening and aware. In the Old Testament, we can think of contexts where God answers prayer. These days, we are in New Testament times and cannot sit around waiting on God to speak to us directly after praying. We need to pray, move on with what we have, and not sit and wait for God to immediately give a quick answer to a given set of circumstances. You must have faith, be in continual prayer and allow God to work at the right time.

If you are faced with a set of unforeseen circumstances, always strive to develop a "draft" decisive plan of action in your mind and use prayer to help refine and discern this plan. Don't freak out and lose your faith or religion just because you make a decision and then the unexpected happens. You might think the decision is wrong just because you are suffering. If any man suffers, let him suffer as a Christian. Certainly, we suffer for doing what's right. But if it is a correct decision and laughter comes into your psyche, you might perceive it as humiliating. But that laughter may be the result of you making a correct decision and defeating the Devil's plan. Always remember that the Devil is hard at work and knows Scripture, and that you must be able to continue making decisions that are aligned with God's Word.

You may not always see the entire path or picture, but you should be able to take the correct path as you come to forks in the road. Just remember the initial prompting or reasons why you made the decision and continue from that point. Think about a decision you made in the past when you were deep in the Spirit, "praised and prayed up," and how quickly you were able to discern the next steps. Ultimately, if something is morally correct and it causes someone to ridicule you or negate what you are trying to do, this could be reassurance that you are making the right decision.

1 Corinthians 2:14 “The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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What are the benefits of physical activity? Researchers from around the globe agree that physical activity (including walking) helps you to maintain a healthy weight and improve your blood pressure, mood, and coordination. The FWCOC Health and Wellness Ministry wants to foster such objectives by encouraging the community and church members to join forces and actively participate in the annual 5K walk. Each year, the FWCOC schedules a 5K walk to encourage people in the community to get active and to promote fellowship. The walk’s health and fellowship benefits mean that many of the same people participate every year.

We designed the walk to be smooth and easy, so everyone can participate. Afterwards, participants typically say they enjoyed it and plan to continue to walk or do some other physical activity in the future. Participants also understand that if they are not physically active on a regular basis, they may experience muscle soreness the next day. But, if you keep walking, the discomfort will go away as your body adjusts to regular exercise. Participants who are on medication use the wellness walk to help moderate their conditions. Some have noticed that they feel more alert during and after the walk, which helps them maintain their overall wellness. Since being healthy in both mind and body is essential to wellness, the 5K walk provides the perfect opportunity for people to get active and enjoy the benefits of fellowship and a nutritious meal (Continued in Part II -- After the 5K Walk, What’s Next?).

1 John 1:7 “7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Health and Wellness. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Exercise or nutrition: Which is better? Merriam-Webster defines these terms as follows—exercise: “bodily exertion for the sake of developing and maintaining physical fitness”; nutrition: “the sum of the processes by which an animal or plant takes in and utilizes food substances” (Source: Merriam-Webster). These are great definitions, but how do they work together? Researchers state that exercise without nutrition does not promote optimal health and well being. Generally, 80 percent healthy nutrition and 20 percent exercise are required to maintain wellness and keep the body in its best condition (Source: USDA.gov). Regardless of how much you exercise, it is important to remember the phrase “You are what eat.”

After the 5K walk participants had a chance to fellowship while enjoying a snack. Food and liquids are important for recovery after exercise. At this time, carbohydrate storage is lower; therefore it is important to have a post-exercise meal of starchy and lean-protein foods. These items should be consumed as soon as possible after exercise to restore important body function levels.

As a best practice for optimal health and wellness, participants should strive to have a balanced diet including fruits and vegetables and maintain a regular exercise schedule.

1 Timothy 4:8-9 “8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Health and Wellness. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
During the 2017 hurricane season, Hurricane Harvey hit Houston and impacted thousands of lives. If you live in the Houston area, you were among those whose lives were impacted in some way. Maybe water flooded your house or car. Maybe you could not go to work. Maybe you had to shelter in a strange place. Maybe you had to venture through different routes to reach your destination, or maybe you simply could not maintain your normal routines and errands because of other limitations.

Hurricanes are oftentimes called storms of powerful and destructive forces of wind and water. According to Merriam-Webster, a storm is defined as: “a disturbance of the atmosphere marked by wind and usually by rain, snow, hail, sleet, or thunder and lightning; or a disturbed or agitated state.”

Hurricanes can be tracked via weather sites and media, providing folks with enough time to prepare for impacts. They can even evacuate ahead of time until the storm blows over. These measures can be taken during a natural storm, but what if we consider the later definition of "a disturbed or agitated state" to mean one that impacts our emotional state? Emotional storms that come into our lives cannot be predicted, tracked, or planned for. Once this type of storm hits, do we just panic and allow the storm to move throughout our daily life and devastate us? Or do we go on, pray, think of ways to work things out, and focus on not missing the true message of the storm—to figure out what we are supposed to do and trust that God will bring us through it? Emotional storms are put into our lives to help us grow and learn to make difficult decisions regarding what we are faced with—even if the emotional storm is part of the aftermath of a natural catastrophic event. At the time, these storms seem overwhelming, but faithful Christians understand that God will never give us more than we can handle and that we should be in prayer and trust him. (Continued in Part II)

Matthew 8:26 "26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Fifth Ward Church of Christ
Ministry In-Brief

A Profile of Ministries at Work

Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry:
“After the Storm, Now What?, Part II -- Temporary”

Temporary. What does this term mean? Merriam-Webster defines the word temporary as: "lasting for a limited time; e.g. the delay is only temporary." We know that tangible weather-related storms are temporary. Emotional storms, however, are misleading. While they are not tangible, they are certainly also temporary.

We know that the seasons in nature are temporary because we can see and feel seasonal changes throughout the year. We weather through them and act accordingly. Why can't we treat emotional storms the same way? A frantic emotional state will get you nowhere, and oftentimes creates "nicks and pings" in the physical body.

We should "live" where we are, regardless of circumstances, and strive to keep "devastating" emotions at bay. Christians should use focused emotional energy to pray, have others pray for them, think, and act. Don't just sit and wait without doing anything. There is always a way to maneuver through the storm, being "gently shaken" rather than "overly stirred into a crisis state."

One way to respond to emotional storms is to allow a time frame to feel down and understand the situation. Some say 5 minutes is enough, but no more than 24 hours should be allocated to ponder what has occurred and begin to work toward regaining a natural state of being over time.

Faithful Christians, remember that whatever we are going through must be understood as a temporary situation and that God is working things out. Think of an emotional storm as a season and look past it as a way for reset, renewal, and growth (Continued in Part III -- Reset, Renewal, and Growth).

Psalms 90:12 "12 Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Fifth Ward Church of Christ

Ministry In-Brief

A Profile of Ministries at Work

Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry:

“After the Storm, Now What?, Part III -- Reset, Renewal and Growth”

What if you lost everything as the result of a tangible storm and had to rebuild and start over? What if you had an emotional crisis that stopped you in your tracks and forced you to pause, pray, think, act and grow? As Christians, we cannot let any storm (tangible or intangible) "crack" or "shatter" our spirit, leaving us "clinging" to pieces (material possessions, emotional turmoil) that are not salvageable. Instead, we should always look for ways to reset, renew and grow after any storm, tangible or intangible.

The best way to initiate a reset is to cultivate an attitude of gratitude, while using the past for learning. That gratitude should give us the motivation to make better decisions and become better prepared and more aware of events and circumstances that oftentimes are beyond our control. We should continue to live, be joyful, and thrive, regardless of the circumstances. Resetting should also consist of a recommitment to God, as we count our days, remain patient, and value the things that are really important in our lives, such as relationships.

Faithful Christians should know that both tangible and intangible storms only make us stronger by enabling us to rely on God’s strength and grow from such experiences. You must know that you are able to weather any storm and make decisions along the way because God will never give you anything that you cannot handle. This is easier to do for tangible losses from a catastrophe, as you can look past it and understand that the losses were material things that can be replaced over time. Tangible losses often relate to things you thought you wanted when you first acquired or purchased them. But when they’re gone, do you really miss them? If they were so important, why didn’t you take the necessary and appropriate measures and have a plan to save them? Was losing those material possessions a blessing in disguise?

However, emotional disturbances, including sadness, fear, anger, and disappointment, can turn into disastrous storms if you allow them to take over your natural state of being. You should not let your emotions turn into a crisis that leads you away from God. Christians who have been through various storms will tell you to continue to pray, praise, live, think, and act, letting God guide you into a way of being that values renewal and growth. God will provide assistance in various ways, oftentimes from known and unknown people. You should always think and listen for clues, inherent prompting (sometimes referred to as "birds that fly in your head"), and conversations from grounded individuals at times, prompting you to "move and act" even though you do not understand why. You will soon discover that you can adapt to the situation, start making rational decisions, and use skills you did not realize you had. In the end, you should not miss the meaning of the challenges you had to face and how you reacted to various situations. Christians should stay in prayer, keep the faith and stay focused because God is aware of all movements and is in charge. This is true even though it may seem far-fetched, as you cannot see the full path in the moment.

Philippians 4:9-11 "9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. 10 I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Frequently asked questions to a Christian. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
How do we come to the point where we believe that God created everything? What is the basis of what you believe? Can you prove to me that I have a spirit? These are common questions that we strive to answer/discuss as inquiring minds want to understand our faith. Some may think proving that humans have a spirit is a profound task, but it truly can be addressed from a foundational perspective using the Bible. Genesis 1:27 states that we were made in the likeness (image) of God. God is a spirit and he passed on part of himself to mankind. God tells us in his word that we are made of a body (physical body), soul and spirit. They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth through faith.

Our faith is based on the Bible, historical documents, and archaeological records, as well as how people lived in the past. Such records range from physical evidence to how people lived based on their belief systems. If all the evidence is true (the flood, the ark, Moses did live, artifacts, etc.), then your faith builds on it and you believe it, and it's right and it's true.

We can also get a gasp of a person's spirit by the way they speak, what they say and what type of personality they exude. But "tangibly" proving it is not possible by just talking to people. So if I choose not to use the term "spirit", there is still something innate within people that will be separated from the physical body. (Continued in Part II, next In-Brief)

Genesis 1:27 "27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Ministry Outreach In-Brief. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry:

Prove to me that I have a Spirit, Part II

What’s the best way to prove that our faith is strong in what we believe about our Spirit? Do we just pick up the Bible and quote scripture as a way of teaching and learning? Do we review current events and try to make the Bible real?

How do we initiate a conversation, discussion, or debate to help people understand why our faith allows us to believe that we have a Spirit? One way to do this is by using an implicit story. For instance, a fisherman who cannot swim is near the ocean and suddenly, a swift current flows and causes him to go under. A bystander who has faith and experience swimming in swift currents jumps in and attempts to rescue him.

After the rescuer jumps in for the rescue, the fisherman, who may be oblivious to the seriousness of the situation, inadvertently struggles with the rescuer, even though he knows something is inherently wrong. The rescuer, knowing this would be a possibility, is prepared to handle any unintentional struggling activity. The rescuer finally gets the fisherman back to shore and explains the situation. The rescuer has faith that the fisherman will eventually understand why he needed to be saved.

This is one example of faith that allows us to continually minister to people who may or may not believe that they have a Spirit. Ideally faith should be strong regardless of the conditions that surround you. Ultimately trusting in God and what He has allowed us to experience in our everyday lives strengthens our faith for any endeavor.

Matthew 14:30-31 "30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"" (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Ministry: Ministry Outreach In-Brief. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Gary Smith, Karl Spencer. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Wellness Monitoring

Are health and wellness checks good indicators of overall health? Why is early detection important? Does diet play a role in my overall health and help keep me out of the emergency room? These types of questions were addressed during the annual health and wellness sessions. Participants were also able to get quality wellness screenings. Health and wellness should be an integral part of our daily lives and not just an afterthought. It’s not enough to just exercise and let everything else go, including good hygiene and diet. Screening and monitoring can prove to be very valuable to everyone. Two especially good screenings to monitor are those for blood pressure and diabetes.

During our last health check sessions, volunteers answered health-related questions and performed blood pressure and diabetes screening for participants. As volunteers screened participants, they recorded blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Each participant left with a handout highlighting normal ranges. This was the opportune time to teach participants about ranges and what to do after these initial screenings. It was also a way to educate participants about the types of medication options. Participants were also encouraged to follow-up with their physician. From what they had for breakfast to why foods and beverages can impact blood pressure and blood sugar levels, participants gained valuable insight into these conditions.

3 John 1:2 “2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Health and Wellness. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Cordelia Bevil (RN), Dr. Hank Malone (MD). Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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Merriam-Webster defines occupational therapy as: “therapy based on engagement in meaningful activities of daily life (as self-care skills, education, work, or social interaction) especially to enable or encourage participation in such activities despite impairments or limitations in physical or mental functioning.” This is a broad definition, and it may raise questions of how it applies to people’s everyday lives. During discussions with participants, volunteers answered key questions related to occupational therapy. Some people tend to marginalize occupational therapy as “if I get hurt, I will just go to therapy.” Yes, occupational therapy can aid recovery, but what exactly should the thinking be for occupational therapy?

Let’s take a scenario of an elderly person accidentally falling in their home, which leads to an injury. They end up staying in the hospital and getting additional complications, which lead to not being mobile. Occupational therapy comes into play and helps the person get out of the bed and move around, putting them back on their feet without the fear of falling. Most don’t think about occupational therapy for children, but kids are a focus for a number of reasons. Most kids learn through play and occupational workshops can be focused on the ability to play and have a rich environment. Regardless of age, everyone should allow for some sort of physical and mental activity.

Matthew 9:12 “12 On hearing this, Jesus said, It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.” (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))


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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Is voting important? Will my vote count? Why should I vote? These are common questions people ask when they consider voting. During our Day of Good Works, volunteers answered key questions related to voting. Why should I vote? Typical answers have ranged across platforms, communities, and parties, but here are a few things to consider when you decide whether to vote. Make a Difference: Your vote helps decide among key people running for office and therefore makes a difference in how the country will function. You may consider how election results could impact your life over the relevant term and how your vote gives you the ability to make a difference. Exercise Your Legal Right: Voting may not seem important if you have a job and you are doing well, but remember that voting lets you exercise your legal right for local, state, or national elections.

Express Your Voice: If you do not vote, you have less influence on the direction of local, state, or national government leaders. Some may even say that if you don’t vote, you don’t really have the right to complain. Voting is a way to express your voice upfront, so that if you want or need to complain later, you can stand up with confidence and make your point.

Acts 26:10 "10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord’s people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))


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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
The Essentials of a Healthy Meal, Part I

Do we need to be motivated to cook a nutritious meal? Is it hard work to cook a healthy meal from scratch? Oftentimes being able to see the final dish helps us understand the exact steps that go into crafting appealing and nourishing food.

Some critics say that if food is too tasty, it cannot be good for you. Well, that depends on what we train our palettes to consider good—which includes visual presentation. In the following scene, a meal of salmon, cauliflower and sautéed mushrooms is both aesthetically appealing and healthy.

Making observations about a meal and then working backwards to understand how it was prepared also provides an incentive for cooking. The Essentials of a Healthy Meal series will help you understand the importance of fresh, unprocessed foods and the key ingredients that go into a healthy meal. Chef Jimmie Thomas continues to bring us lessons and examples that increase our knowledge of food.

Acts 10:10 "10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Cooking Class. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Jimmie Thomas. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
The Hands-On/Minds-On cooking class session is a way for participants to apply what they are being taught using cooking utensils and food products during a dynamic class session. Participants are able to use this knowledge at home as they plan and prepare meals. The meal depicted in the scene below consists of sautéed mushrooms, cauliflower, and salmon. Participants not only had the chance to cook a meal, they also came to understand the benefits of the ingredients. Research has shown that the benefits of a meal containing cauliflower, mushrooms, and salmon include: fighting cancer, anti-inflammatory results, system detoxification, heart health, enhanced weight loss, increasing vitamin D intake, improving immune system functions, increasing protein intake, cardiovascular health, osteoarthritic cartilage support, protection against macular degeneration, and even the promotion of a good night’s sleep. (Source: usda.gov)

Making observations and understanding the benefits of key ingredients during meal preparation can be a valuable way of helping participants to want to “own” their meals and not just eat from a meal plan. Chef Jimmie Thomas continues to bring us lessons and examples that increase our knowledge of food.

1 Corinthians 10:27 "27 If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Cooking Class. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Jimmie Thomas. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
As coordinators for the Mothers Support Group, Odell Smith and Katherine Gibson are careful to cultivate a spiritually uplifting atmosphere that leaves the mothers wanting more. The atmosphere is relaxed and very supportive and open discussions are common during each session. Odell Smith and Katherine Gibson coordinate an enthusiastic group of mothers who are anxious to absorb any information that will assist their quest to be better mothers. The group consists of young and experienced mothers. The mix makes for interactive conversations. During a recent session, two mothers shared first-hand experiences of raising special needs children.

Both stated, “The best way to encourage parents of special needs children is to show love to their children.” One mother revealed a common struggle of special needs parents, “blaming ourselves.” Other mothers in attendance shared unique experiences and heartfelt suggestions for meeting challenges that seem insurmountable. Encouragement overflowed. There was not a dry eye in the session. What a priceless resource! Odell and Katherine continue to coordinate activities and provide mentoring, guidance and support for mothers. Topics vary by session, but include: “Time Management,” “Making Time For Yourself,” “Managing the Television,” “Blended Families,” “How to Discipline,” “Parenting A Special Needs Child,” and “Raising Godly Children.”

Proverbs 31:26 "26 She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Mothers Support Group. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Odell Smith and Katherine Gibson. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Health and Wellness Ministry, Part I - Wellness Walk

As a key coordinator for the Health and Wellness Ministry, Leroy Mobley is focused on health and fitness with a direct link to overall wellness. One of the Ministry’s events is a yearly 5K Wellness Walk. This walk is used as a way to extend the organization’s monthly efforts and get everyone involved so they can learn about monthly ongoing health and wellness sessions and events. Today, it’s important to make use of different ways to encourage people to get out and move. People have the opportunity to participate in a variety of walks, so we try to make everyone aware of the importance of exercise.

Every year the Health and Wellness Ministry plans a 5K walk. The purpose of this walk is to encourage everyone to get up and move, which is linked to the fact that God wants us to move and take care of our bodies. Our goal is three-fold: (1) Encourage people to make it to the walk; (2) Provide awareness to the community about FWCC and its Resource Center offerings; and (3) Invite all church members and non-members that are already familiar with the church to increase their knowledge, grow, and become aware of the church’s various offerings. We also initiated a health fair to invite people to come in and get shots and health checks. We added this 5K walk to help encourage everyone to exercise, come together, and get on the path to overall wellness.

3 John 1:2 "2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Health and Wellness. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Leroy Mobley. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

http://www.fwcoc.org

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Part II of the Wellness Walk integrates the Cooking Class to emphasize the importance of proper nutrition for overall health and wellness. This integration answers the following question: What is the link between the Cooking Class and the Health and Wellness Ministry? Is it possible to walk too much? If you walk without eating the right foods, then you may have health problems regardless of how much you exercise. If you stop moving, the body eventually changes and reacts to non-movement, but to exercise and have energy, you need to eat right.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle should be 80% proper nutrition and 20% exercise. Proper nutrition should include foods that are more alkaline than acidic. Even though this may mean buying more expensive foods, the overall wellness benefits exceed the costs of trying to eat right. This means you may have to perform "meal management," i.e., plan and prepare your meals to include vegetables, nuts, seeds, grains, protein, and fruits. Leroy Mobley continues to lead the way to self-improvement as he finds new ways to promote health and wellness.

**Genesis 1:29** "29 Then God said, I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

**Resource Center/Ministry:** Health and Wellness. **Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley. **Location:** Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Garden of Eden, Part I - From the Garden to the Table

Part I of the Garden of Eden - from the Garden to the Table, profiles a commonly known vegetable, the squash. This vegetable is used to illustrate how easily fresh vegetables can be incorporated into your weekly meal management plan. According to the US Department of Agriculture, the word squash comes from the Narragansett and Iroquois words "askootasquash," and "isquoutersquash" both meaning "eaten green." Squash belongs to a family of plants that includes pumpkins, cucumbers, and melons. In this photo collage, squash is shown growing in the garden and then washed and ready to be prepared for the table. Squash is great steamed, boiled, sautéed, baked or grilled. Squash provides various nutritional benefits including vitamins A and C, potassium and fiber.

Squash is also rich in carotenoids, plant elements which research has shown helps to reduce the risk of macular degeneration and colon cancer. (Source: usda.gov) For overall wellness, it is important to include a variety of nutritious vegetables in your daily dietary intake. Squash can be used as one of the key rotational vegetables for those who want more variety in their weekly meal management plans. The more vegetables you consume, especially when combined with exercise, the better your chance of enjoying a wellness lifestyle.

Matthew 13:32 "32 Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Garden of Eden Work Day. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Roosevelt Hill, Barney Smith. Location: Community Garden.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Garden of Eden, Part II - From the Garden to the Table

Part II of the Garden of Eden - from the Garden to the Table, profiles the widely used plant, basil. Basil is one of the most widely known and grown plants across the world and can easily be incorporated into your plan for adding flavor to foods. According to the US Department of Agriculture, basil is "one of the most beloved of culinary herbs" and grows well during the height of summer. Basil is used extensively to add a distinctive aroma and flavor to food. The nutritional aspects of fresh basil leaves include vitamins K and A, manganese, and magnesium. The leaves can be used fresh or dried for later use. In this scene, basil can be seen growing in an area of the community garden and then shown washed and prepared for cooking.

A tip to remember when growing most types of basil is to pinch off any developing flowers or flower buds as you see them. When the plant starts to flower, it shifts its focus away from making leaves and into making seeds for the next generation. Pinching or cutting off the emerging flower stalks helps your basil stick to the task at hand—producing leaves. (Source: usda.gov)

Luke 11:42 "42 "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Garden of Eden Work Day. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Roosevelt Hill, Barney Smith. Location: Community Garden.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Part III of the Garden of Eden - from the Garden to the Table, profiles collard greens. This leafy green vegetable has been identified by key researchers as having several benefits including reducing the risk of certain types of cancer.

As a member of the cabbage family, collard greens grow in a loose bouquet instead of a tight "head" like other cabbages. Collards are traditionally slow cooked with pork or quick cooked like cabbage. Another approach is to pick them from the garden (or purchase organic), wash them and add them to a soupy tomato vegetable-type mixture as depicted in the scene. Essential facts on collards include that they are: fat-free; cholesterol-free; very low in sodium; low in calories; an excellent source of vitamin A, vitamin C and folate; and a good source of calcium and fiber.

Vitamin A is necessary for healthy body tissue, vitamin C acts as an antioxidant, and fiber may help reduce the risk of colon cancer by helping get rid of digestive wastes. Collards also contain beneficial phytochemicals. Selecting bunches with dark green leaves with no yellowing is the best way to select greens. (Source: usda.gov)

Proverbs 11:28 "28 “Those who trust in their riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Garden of Eden Work Day. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Roosevelt Hill, Barney Smith. Location: Community Garden.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Merriam-Webster defines wellness as: “the quality or state of being in good health especially as an actively sought goal”. This is a great definition and seems to be popular with institutions as a way to promote a healthy lifestyle. But how do we cook for wellness? Does food have to be bland and tasteless to be healthy? Should we eat certain foods for energy before exercising? These types of questions and more are discussed during the Cooking Class as Chefs prepare meals and address various myths about food.

During a recent cooking class, grilling was the focus as Chefs discussed ways to improve cooking habits for grilling popular foods. As a part of the experience, Chefs grilled various meats (including beef, salmon and chicken) and discussed the "Why" behind food as they engaged participants during the class.

Chefs also emphasized that food can taste good and meet the daily nutritional needs in order to support overall wellness (mind, body and soul). Chefs Sean Perrodin and Jimmie Thomas continue to bring us several ways to increase our knowledge of food as they strive to illustrate various ways to plan and prepare nutritious meals.

3 John 1:2 "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (Source: Bible – King James Version)

Resource Center/Ministry: Cooking Class. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Jimmie Thomas, Sean Perrodin. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Salt and sugar intake is on the minds of all health conscious individuals, but what do we really know about salt and sugar? Should salt be eliminated from the diet for blood pressure management? Should sugar be monitored or regulated in people that do not have diabetes? Some doctors say that all people have blood pressure and blood sugar issues based on their ability to metabolize varying amounts of salt and sugar within a given time frame. These types of questions and more are discussed during the Cooking Class as the chefs prepare meals and address various myths about food. As part of a recent cooking class session, the chefs--Sean and Jimmy discussed the health related impacts of salt and sugar. This discussion included the varying forms of these ingredients in natural and processed foods. They also provided examples of packaged food, condiments and spices in order to illustrate that calculating the actual amount of salt and sugar based on nutrition facts is simple and easy.

To complete the experience, the chefs prepared food samples using salt and sugar in order to illustrate the benefits of including both in your diet. Chefs Sean Perrodin and Jimmie Thomas continue to bring us several ways to increase our knowledge of food as they strive to illustrate various methods of planning and preparing nutritious meals.

**Colossians 4:6** "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."
(Source: Bible – King James Version)

**Resource Center/Ministry:** Cooking Class. **Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Jimmie Thomas, Sean Perrodin. **Location:** Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
How do we distinguish between so-called "good" and "bad" fats? Should we rely on recent research and apply it to all body types and metabolism rates? Some researchers are starting to promote wellness with linkages to various types of fats that people consume. The chefs stay abreast of relevant research and continue to demystify food as they empower participants to get involved in a minds-on approach during the Cooking Class.

As part of a recent Cooking Class session, the chefs--Sean and Jimmy discussed healthcare vs. self-care in a way for understanding the impacts of various types of oils and fats. The chefs cooked various types of food including salmon to illustrate examples of adding essential oils to your diet. They pointed out the aspects of wild caught versus farmed raised salmon.

The chefs also addressed a number of issues and questions, including the importance of the Cooking Class.

Proverbs 21:20 "20 The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down." (Source: Bible – New International Version (NIV))

Resource Center/Ministry: Cooking Class. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Jimmie Thomas, Sean Perrodin. Location: Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
Do you think about how the vegetables you eat are grown? Is organic, really "in-tune" with nature or just a label? How does a garden relate to spirituality and Godliness? These are questions that Garden of Eden Work Day Coordinators can help answer when you visit the garden. Please take a moment to review a post from the Garden of Eden Work Day as a way to enhance your understanding of a direct link to God's word.

Several Fifth Ward Church of Christ “green thumbs” have partnered with a Fifth Ward community garden project to bring much needed nutritional food to Fifth Ward AND Houston area residents. Fifth Ward Church of Christ has committed to cultivating and maintaining a designated section of the garden. We have named our section, “The Garden of Eden.”

Passionate gardeners, Roosevelt Hill and Barney Smith are coordinating our efforts. Several gifted members are working with them to produce a wellspring of blessings for many.

Luke 13:18-19 - "18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? 19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it." (Source: Bible – King James Version)

Resource Center/Ministry: Garden of Eden Work Day. Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s): Roosevelt Hill, Barney Smith. Location: Community Garden.

http://www.fwcoc.org
Do you know the difference between a fruit and a vegetable? What about the arguments and benefits of both? Have you noticed that trends in society are promoting more natural and organically grown plants to promote wellness? A conversation with Coordinators during your visit to the Garden of Eden Work Day can be informative as these types of questions are answered and demystified. Picking fresh vegetables can prove to be an enlightening and joyful experience. FWCC Member Marilyn Washington decided to visit the Garden of Eden Work Day after attending the Cooking Class to complete her Saturday experience. Marilyn noticed that vegetables were thriving in the garden as evidenced by the abundance of squash and kale. During the Cooking Class, Chefs reinforced the importance of making vegetables a major portion of a meal. Kale was used in one of the recipes by the Chefs as a tip for meatballs.

Researchers state that kale is one of the healthiest vegetables on the planet. It belongs to the same family that that includes vegetables such as cabbage, collards and broccoli. Kale contains vitamins (A, C, and K) and is a good source of potassium, iron, manganese and phosphorus. (Source: USDA)

**John 15:4-6** 4 "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned". (Source: Bible – King James Version)

**Resource Center/Ministry:** Garden of Eden Work Day. **Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Roosevelt Hill, Barney Smith. **Location:** Community Garden.

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“Changing the World for the better Everyday”
How do seasonal changes impact plants and the animals that rely on them? Just because popular produce is readily available across seasons in a grocery store, should we consume them year round? A rich discussion with Coordinators at Garden of Eden Work Day can be quite informative as these types of questions continue to be addressed, researched and answered in a way for true understanding. Organically grown plants may be new to some, but "old hat" to those who experienced the taste of fresh produce from a family backyard garden. The Garden of Eden Work Day is a way for members to taste and see that God's glorious produce is fresh from the plant as it was created to be. One FWCC Member, Herman Brown, decided to stop by the garden to experience this freshness first hand. Herman decided to taste fresh peppers and help pick okra for another member.

According to the USDA, okra contains a powerhouse of valuable nutrients and soluble and insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber helps to lower cholesterol, reducing the risk of heart disease. Insoluble fiber helps to keep the intestinal tract healthy decreasing the risk of some forms of cancer, especially colorectal cancer.

**Acts 14:17** "17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Source: Bible – King James Version)

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