

### In This Issue

Welcome to Your New Newsletter! .....	1	Tips for Developing and Maintaining Social Ties .....	3
Friends and Family for Good Health!.....	1	Easy Healthy Recipe.....	3
Loneliness, Friendships and Mental Health.....	2	Why Five Dimensions? .....	4
Don't Go It Alone! .....	2	Resources .....	4
Summer Health: Think to Drink .....	3	Print and Share Bulletins .....	4



### SPOTLIGHT

## Friends and Family for Good Health!

A robust social network including relatives, friends and other relationships can help contribute to a long and healthy life.

Research indicates positive relationships sow the seeds for the following benefits:

- Fewer colds
- Better sleep
- Brain power
- Longer life
- Improved coping

Learn more at [www.health.com](http://www.health.com).

“We need not think alike to love alike.”

—John Wesley

Keep an open mind to include many people in your social circles.

The Center for Health focuses on improving five dimensions of well-being—physical, emotional, spiritual, social and financial—for clergy and laity of The United Methodist Church (UMC) and their families. Among the Center for Health’s offerings are: interactive website, well-being programs, trends and research, educational opportunities and the UMC Health Ministry Network (UMCHMN) and related resources.

## Welcome to Your New Newsletter!

The Center for Health (CFH) is a division of Wespath Benefits and Investments—the new name for the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

The Center for Health’s goal is to help you on a “path to personal and missional vitality.” The quarterly Center for Health newsletter is designed to support this path with useful information for you and those you care about. Short articles will focus on the five dimensions of well-being and the influence each has on your overall well-being, as well as printable bulletins to share with congregations or other groups. Well-being is a lifelong personal journey and like any trip, it will have twists and turns. We are here to support you every step of the way.

This quarter’s focus is primarily on the Social Dimension of well-being—see how nurturing good social networks can improve other areas of your life.

Please let us know if there are topics you would like to see in future newsletters. We welcome your feedback, your personal success stories or well-being trends from your conference or congregation. E-mail us at [welnessteam@wespath.org](mailto:welnessteam@wespath.org).



**Jon M. Jones**  
Managing Director—Center for Health  
Wespath Benefits and Investments

### Wespath Benefits and Investments

Over the course of our 108 years of service, the scope of our mission evolved and our name evolved with it, expressing the nature of our work.

We are the largest reporting denominational investor in the world with approximately \$20 billion in assets under management. But our name did not reflect this important aspect of our work—helping protect the financial future of our 100,000 participants.

#### Wespath—Symbol and Symbolism

We developed the name Wespath in 2010 as the brand for our investments division with two important elements in mind:

**Wes**—recognizes and honors John Wesley, the founder of Methodism and a strong advocate for social justice;

**Path**—refers to our goal of providing participants and institutional clients with a path to follow in achieving personal health, investment and retirement objectives.

While the name Wespath honors Wesley, it also implies the other Wesleyan philosophical tenets—the importance of physical health, financial security and caring for God’s creation. The name Wespath has already achieved name recognition across the United Methodist Church (UMC) through the many UMC-affiliated organizations we now have among our institutional investment clients.



## ASK A PROFESSIONAL

**Shauna Summers**

Licensed Professional Counselor in Illinois; Pastoral Care and Counseling Coordinator for the Illinois Great Rivers Conference

# Loneliness, Friendships and Mental Health

As adults we have childhood friends, high school friends and friends we met when we lived in city X—but, sometimes we don't have "right now" friends. Research shows that friends are important to our physical and mental health. "... People who do not have strong support from friends and family live shorter lives and suffer more from stress," says Cheryl A. Richey, Ph.D., professor of social work at the University of Washington. "Support from friends can give people the strength to make positive changes in their lives, like staying away from drugs or leaving an abusive relationship."\*

Start with an expectation. Expect to have many friends because you are worth it. Some people like to have more friends than others, so the number is different for everyone. A goal for many people is to have three to five close friends. To add friends to your support network, try one, or a combination, of these:

- Get involved with people you encounter in your regular daily routine.
- Put yourself in new situations where you will meet people.
- Join a club or other activity where you are likely to meet people with shared interests.



If you are looking to strengthen the friendships you currently have, here are some things to remember:

- Be reliable, responsible and reciprocal in your daily associations with people.
- Personal boundaries are important! This may include keeping some on an acquaintance level rather than pursuing close friendships.
- It isn't the number of friends you have that is important, it is the quality of the friendships you have.

Remember the saying, "To have friends, you need to be a friend."

\* *Cascade Centers Employee Assistance Program newsletter, July 2015*



**Jesse N. Love**

*Graphic Designer and Print Manager  
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## PERSONAL SUCCESS STORY

# Don't Go It Alone!

I visited the doctor for a physical a few years ago. After several tests, I found that my triglycerides were high and I was diagnosed as diabetic. So began the emotions that come with the harsh news brought on by poor dietary and health choices. After processing my health situation, I decided to take action. I acknowledged I couldn't do this alone and began walking with friends during work breaks. I encouraged my wife to join my gym so we could go together; I asked friends to join me at the mall—not just to shop, but to get those extra steps needed to generate great blood flow and a good attitude.

I am a long way from being perfect, but I am working toward a consistent schedule of physical activity. This may not sound like much, but like many working adults who are busy with life, it takes a conscious effort to make good health a priority. Integrating health and time with friends has social benefits as well as physical.



## ASK A NURSE

**Jo Sanders, BSN, RN**

Faith Community Nurse, Illinois Great Rivers Conference member

# Summer Health: Think to Drink

Our bodies are more than 60% water. Every day we lose some of this water through breath, sweat, urine and bowel movements. We must replace this fluid to stay healthy and prevent dehydration.

When it is hot outside, dehydration can start before we even begin to feel thirsty. It is important to “think to drink” fluid throughout the day to keep our minds sharp and help our bodies run efficiently.

Individual fluid needs vary. The Institute of Medicine suggests an adequate fluids intake is about 13 eight-ounce glasses a day for men and nine for women. Drink even more when the weather is hot and humid. Higher altitudes and dry climates also increase our need. Seniors are at greater risk of dehydration because the ability to sense thirst lessens with age.

Water is always a great choice because it is calorie and sugar free, but all liquids help us stay hydrated. We also get fluids from things like dairy products, fruits and vegetables.



Here are some tips to help you think to drink:

- Drink as soon as you get up in the morning and with each meal.
- Drink each time you visit the restroom.
- Keep a beverage by your desk and in your car. Take sips throughout the day.
- Jazz it up! Add ice, sliced fruit and/or fresh herbs to plain or sparkling water.

To learn more go to [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

## WELL-BEING TIPS FOR LEADERS

### Tips for Developing and Maintaining Social Ties

When developing and maintaining healthy social ties, sometimes you’re the one giving support and other times, you’re on the receiving end. Taking time to nurture relationships pays off.

Tips for success:

- **Go easy**—communication can be a brief phone call or e-mail.
- **Be aware of how others perceive you**—ask a friend for an honest evaluation of how you come across to others. Take note of areas for improvement.
- **Don’t compete with others**—competing can turn potential friends into potential rivals.
- **Adopt a healthy, realistic self-image**—both vanity and self-criticism can be unattractive to potential friends.
- **Resolve to improve yourself**—cultivating your honesty, generosity and humility will enhance your self-esteem and make you a more compassionate and appealing friend.
- **Avoid complaining**—complaining is tiresome and can be draining on support systems. Instead, talk to your family and friends about how to improve unpleasant situations.
- **Adopt a positive outlook**—try to find the humor in things.
- **Listen**—make a point to remember what’s going on in the lives of others. Sharing details about yourself and your life can also help establish rapport.

Adapted from: Developing social support: How to cultivate a network of friends to help you through rough times, [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org).

## Easy Healthy Recipe

Influence others at your potlucks and social gatherings by bringing a healthy choice.

### CUCUMBER WATERMELON SALAD

Serves 4

Serving size: 1½ cups

#### INGREDIENTS

- 3 Tablespoons lime juice
- 2 Tablespoons sugar or honey
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley
- 2 medium unpeeled cucumbers, washed with ends removed
- 3 cups watermelon, cut into 1 inch cubes (about 1 pound)

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Cut cucumbers in half lengthwise then slice crosswise
2. Combine lime juice and sugar or honey in a large bowl; whisk together. Stir in parsley
3. Add cucumbers; toss, coating all the cucumber pieces
4. Add in watermelon; fold in gently
5. Cover, set aside and allow juice from the watermelon to mix with the other juices. Stir gently and serve

#### Nutrition Facts

Amount per Serving\*

Calories: 90
Total fat: 0.5 g
Saturated fat: 0 g
Total Carbohydrate: 20 g
Cholesterol: 0 g
Dietary Fiber: 2 g
Protein: 2 g

\* Percentage Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Adapted from [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)





# Why Five Dimensions?



What do you think of when you hear the word “wellness”? Many people think of exercise and healthy eating. The Center for Health takes it a step further—instead of wellness, we think of “well-being”, a more wholistic term fitting with John Wesley’s outlook toward health and the congregation. While *physical* health is essential, so is emotional health, financial readiness, connectedness and spiritual health—or the five dimensions of well-being.



- 1 PHYSICAL DIMENSION** focuses on the importance of daily activity, proper nutrition, maintaining a healthy weight and establishing a good relationship with your primary care provider.
- 2 EMOTIONAL DIMENSION** focuses on awareness and acceptance of stressors and feelings—positive or negative. Emotional well-being includes the ability to manage feelings and related behaviors, cope effectively with stress and adapt to change.
- 3 SPIRITUAL DIMENSION** centers on spiritual relationships and activities that support and enhance these relationships, such as prayer, meditation and worship.
- 4 SOCIAL DIMENSION** focuses on creating and maintaining healthy, supportive relationships with family, friends and peers. Research has demonstrated that having a social support network improves overall well-being.
- 5 FINANCIAL DIMENSION** focuses on attitudes toward money, future financial needs, sound financial habits and utilizing financial resources.

## Resources

The Center for Health offers a host of resources at [wespith.org/center-for-health/](http://wespith.org/center-for-health/).

- CFH articles** related to each of the five dimensions of well-being,
- Congregational resources**—including UMC Health Ministry Network
- Financial well-being**—Wespith selection of articles about retirement, financial planning, family events and other topics
- Newsletter and Bulletins found at [www.wespith.org/CFH/newsletter](http://www.wespith.org/CFH/newsletter)
- Healthy You...Healthy UMC brochure**
- Healthy Families webinar series**, August 2, 2016 – February 7, 2017.
- Calling all young clergy to revitup!** Nov. 7-9, 2016, Lake Buena Vista, FL

### External Resources

- National Institute for Mental Health**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Healthy Living resources**

## Print and Share Bulletins

See this issue’s bulletins for great resources to share with your congregations. Print and stuff in weekly workshop booklets or other church newsletters, use as a small group handout or forward to church groups you think could benefit from the topic. We support you in your effort to create a more vital church.



**BULLETIN #1:**  
Walk Your Way to Better Health!



**BULLETIN #2:**  
Benefits of Local Farmers Markets



## Let Us Know

If you have questions or comments, please contact us anytime at: [wellessteam@wespith.org](mailto:wellessteam@wespith.org)

The journey to well-being lasts a lifetime. Sometimes the path is smooth and other times, there are bumps in the road and work to be done to restore balance. With patience, persistence and support from the Center for Health—you can do it!

### Disclaimer

The Center for Health is a division of Wespith Benefits and Investments. The Center for Health’s sharing of this general information should not be construed as, does not constitute, and should not be relied upon as medical advice nor legal, counseling, accounting, tax, or other professional advice or services on any specific matter.

Links to websites other than those of the Center for Health and the UMC Health Ministry Network are offered as a service to our readers; we were not involved in their production and are not responsible for their content.