

MIND. BODY. SPIRIT.

Be a beacon of holistic well-being!

Discover ideas for health ministry efforts that will inspire and support your community on their journey to embrace abundant mental, physical and spiritual health.

Jesus' mission on earth was inaugurated by healing (Matthew 4:23-24), and his healing ministries were a central sign that Jesus was the promised Messiah (Luke 7:20-22). We believe that God, who is already at work healing, renewing and redeeming creation, not only calls us to follow the path of Jesus by continuing his ministry of healing, but will also empower us with the Spirit as we step forth in mission to seek abundant health for all!

John Wesley was a strong proponent of preventive care and healthy living, so United Methodism has a long history of engaging in ministry that supports mind, body *and* spirit. Keep the tradition by building a strong health ministry presence in your church.

How do we begin? Evaluate the holistic health needs in your community. Once you take an honest look at gaps in mental, physical and spiritual health care, you can begin to identify health ministry initiatives that will be most beneficial to your community and congregation, while also respecting the identity, interests and resources of your church.

How can we minister to mind, body and spirit? Explore the below ministry opportunities that can bring healing resources and opportunities for connection to families and individuals who are seeking a fuller, more abundant life:

Hoop your way to abundant health!

Hulapalooza is a joyful celebration of healthy living centered on a hula-hoop theme. The event is a movement toward abundant health happening in local churches around the world! It has aspects that can strengthen participants' mental, physical and spiritual well-being.

There are many ways to host a Hulapalooza, and it is up to you to decide when you have it and how elaborate or simple you want it to be. Your event might involve worship, a Bible study, group hula-hooping competitions, arts and crafts, a health fair, music, games for kids, and more! It can be adapted to fit the needs, schedule, missional focus and volunteer availability of any local church. A kit of resources is available online to support you as you get started planning your event.

The event is a great opportunity to:

- Build stronger bonds among congregants
- Reach out to people who are seeking connection with a faith community
- Provide everyone (all ages, abilities and backgrounds) a chance to fulfill a common need: to find fun ways to invest in their overall health
- Boost awareness and support of health-related missional opportunities and community needs
- Celebrate the health ministries that you already have, or help launch a new ministry
- Encourage greater appreciation for healthy living and the church's role in supporting holistic well-being



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Nurture abundant mental health!

Could one of these opportunities minister to the mental health needs in your community?

- Organize a time management & stress reduction workshop
- Sponsor a death, grief and loss support group
- Participate in the global movement to overcome stigma, discrimination and neglect
- Form a divorce or single parent support group
- Begin an “adopt a grandparent” program
- Host a bullying awareness class
- Sponsor a substance abuse support group
- Form an accountability partner network for tobacco cessation
- Sponsor a mental health awareness event
- Host a yoga and meditation retreat
- Establish a PTSD, depression or mental health support group
- Support child and youth development programs
- Begin a book club to offer people a chance for community connection
- Host a craft night or scrapbooking weekend
- Promote inclusion of youth with mental, emotional and behavioral problems
- Train people to identify the signs of depression and suicide so they can refer people to resources
- Provide meals or respite care to those with chronic illnesses or mental health challenges
- Make home visits to new parents, older adults, and others who may be disconnected from the community

Encourage abundant physical health!

Could one of these opportunities minister to the physical health needs in your community?

- Sponsor a CPR training class
- Host a training series about lifestyle wellness
- Support organizations providing clean water sources or health care
- Sponsor fun fitness classes, such as Barre or Zumba
- Organize a health screening event
- Host a nutritious meal planning class
- Organize a nature trail hike
- Create a healthy dinner club or healthy recipe exchange event
- Organize a 5K race team
- Create a community garden; organize a harvest potluck in the fall
- Establish an after-school youth sports program
- Partner with a school and provide healthy food for children in need on weekends and holidays
- Contact key decision-makers and encourage them to support health care for all
- Regularly raise funds to support maternal and child health initiatives through The Advance



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- Hold a healthy living week with exercise competitions, such as pedometer challenges
- Dedicate an area in the church for exercising and allow afterschool programs, clubs or groups to use it
- Offer low- or no-cost physical activity programs across the lifespan, from children to older adults

Inspire abundant spiritual health!

Could one of these opportunities minister to the spiritual health needs in your community?

- Sponsor a Sabbath keeping seminar
- Host a gifts in the Spirit class
- Support pastoral education programs
- Hold services of prayer and healing
- Organize a wholeness, health and spirituality retreat
- Distribute a daily Bible passage reading guide
- Ask the congregation to pause to pray for global wholeness and healing each day
- Organize a prayer walk through a local park
- Create a sacred space for reflection, such as a prayer labyrinth
- Make prayer quilts, comfort pillows or care baskets for persons who are in the hospital, residential facility or are bedridden
- Build a community prayer request box outside of your church and invite people to request prayer support

How can we find out what health ministry programs our congregation would be willing to support?

After you review the above (and maybe more!) ideas for health ministry activities, take time to pray and reflect. Then, refine your list of ideas into a short list containing several strong, realistic ministry opportunities that would support community and congregational needs.

Take this short list to your congregational leaders and follow up with a congregation-wide poll to see which ministry(ies) they would like to help bring to the community. Ask them to share new ideas for consideration also – they might be aware of community needs that you don't know of. You can use a free polling website, such as [SurveyMonkey](#), and then send out the link to your survey via email and social media.

Once we have a clear direction and plan for our ministry, what's next? Launching a new ministry is a process that can take months. Patience and Spirit-leading will be necessary as you venture into a new opportunity for serving the community. The following is a brief overview of the process:

1. Pray for the launch of the ministry and that necessary volunteers, participants and resources will be plentiful.
2. Research your selected health ministry. What is involved, what logistics must be in place, how many volunteers are needed, etc.?



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3. Announce the intention to launch this new health ministry to your church and recruit a core group of volunteers who will lead the way.
4. Considering your research, unite as a team to complete all logistics and other required preparation steps; choose a launch date.
5. Recruit more volunteers to assist as needed; fundraise as needed.
6. Get the word out in the congregation and the community via channels where people already get information: emails, social media, banners, booths at events, posters, post cards, community calendars, etc.
7. Launch!
8. If your ministry is a recurring event or program, be consistent and continually reach out to people who would benefit from the ministry so it will grow.

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The United Methodist Church