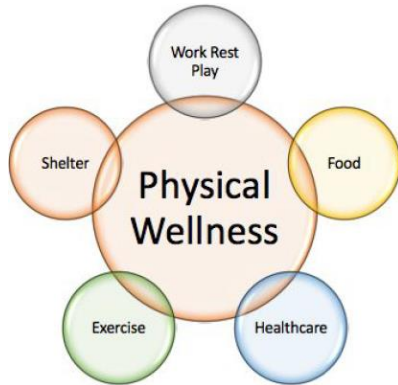


A New Look at Stewardship, **Currency of Wellness**

Wellness, what a timely topic as many have struggled to be emotionally, physically, spiritually and financially well during the pandemic. Jobs have been lost or hours reduced. Numerous workers are in fields that increase their exposure to Covid-19. Most of us have been separated from friends and loved ones while many are with those they live with 24/7. Gyms and fitness classes



have been mostly unavailable and while many have looked to walking, hiking and biking, others aren't comfortable doing so.

Medical and dental appointments are being delayed. Media is plentiful so it's way too easy to sit for hours. There are the baking shows that send us to the kitchen to whip up something that we eat more than we should leading to "COVID Curves" and the "Quarantine 15". And then there is distance learning... Baby boomers are thankful to have dodged that bullet but worry about families and educators who struggle daily to engage students, many while working from home. *We are living in a time of compromised wellness.*



The state of being healthy physically, socially, economically, ecologically, and spiritually within a church, the neighborhood, the city, nation or the earth, especially as the result of deliberate effort. Sustainable wellness requires regenerative and recirculatory flow of material, human, financial and natural resources. In his book, *Holy Currencies*, Eric Law, author and founder of the Kaleidoscope Institute writes,

Developing the currency of wellness means creating opportunities for people to rest, play, celebrate, give thanks, and encounter each other across class, workplace roles, societal roles, family roles, political differences. These opportunities for "Sabbath" are wellness events. A wellness event is a gathering of two or more persons to focus on one or more aspects of wellness. Here are some examples of internal wellness events: annual church community retreat focusing on at least one aspect of wellness, one-on-one pastoral counseling and spiritual directions, ongoing group spiritual direction, sabbatical plans for paid staff and volunteers, and periodic celebrations focusing on at least one aspect of wellness.

Externally, the church can mobilize its resources to provide wellness events for the wider community. Invite people in the neighborhood, town/city to take a "Sabbath"—to rest, to celebrate the gifts they have, to explore how they can work together to ensure the flow of resources in their community achieving wellness for all. When the community is well spiritually, socially, economically and ecologically, the other currencies will flow and the church that take parts in fostering wellness will missional and sustainable.

Historically, many of our past and current ministries and actions address wellness. The Center of Well Being, prayer chain, masks, phone tree, Pilates, Al-Anon, and supporting those in need with food, personal care products, socks, pray shawls, pillowcases, chemo/dialysis bags, backpacks, Christmas gifts, and our partnership with Adobe to help people previously unhoused settle into new housing come to mind. We installed solar lighting and replaced thirsty grass and plants with those needing less water. Recently, breakout rooms during worship services have provided opportunities to connect with others creating or strengthening relationships. We have many opportunities to focus on wellness as we implement our Stewardship365 learnings later in the year.



Stay tuned and be well, your Stewardship Committee

Melinda Kufeld (Chair), Kris Adams, Cam Bauer, Alan Claassen, Linda Paschal, Pr. Pelz, and Debbie Pollak