

The Vision Beautiful **“Faithfully (HEAL)ing”[Healthy Eating and Living]**

In 1997 the General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted a Resolution – Reclaiming the Church’s Ministry of Health and Healing. This Resolution continues to encourage UCC congregations to adopt a philosophy of health, wellness and wholeness as a part of the mission to its members and the community it serves and to establish or designate a body to address health and wellness issues and services confronting members and their communities.

Verse 7(from Eugene H. Peterson’s *The Message*) helps lift up the importance of the faith community’s role in the blessing of caring for others. As a faith community we are to embrace and engage in diakonia – the ministry of healing, service, care, compassion and hospitality

“You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full’, you find yourselves being cared for.”

In *Reclaiming the Church’s Ministry of Health and Healing*, UCC congregations are asked to take seriously their physical health, especially the health of our future generations – children and youth. Congregations are encouraged to care for the children and youth by making sure that they have healthy food choices, healthier schools, physical activity opportunities and access to affordable food. Data from the Centers for Disease Prevention indicate that for the first time in U.S. history we are raising a generation of children who may live sicker, shorter lives than their parents. The United Church of Christ has been asked to partner with First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” campaign to encourage and engage parents, families, schools and communities to end childhood obesity and to ensure access to affordable and healthy foods. Over one-third of American children today are threatened by obesity. While we understand the importance of focusing on obesity, we also recognize that obesity is part of a broad range of health, nutrition and economic issues, including diet, exercise and chronic illnesses. In addition, we are also concerned about the social justice issues related to food, nutrition and health. The UCC Let’s Move initiative is being led by the COREM Health Table and the UCC Faith Community Nurse’s Leadership Team.

Let’s Move Faith Challenge:

- How can we, as people of faith, care for each other by encourage healthy eating and living behaviors in our congregations and communities?
- What actions can congregations take to help individuals, families, and the community-at-large make healthier food choices?
- How can we partner with local schools to ensure better nutrition at schools?
- What new opportunities can congregations create for families to be physically active together?
- How can churches help to ensure that all families have access to healthy, affordable food in their communities?

Resources:

Let’s Move! Campaign Information

<http://www.letsmove.org>

Let’s Move Toolkit for Congregations and Faith-based organizations

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/health/pdfs/Let-s-Move-Toolkit-for-Faith-Based-Organizations.pdf>

Let’s Move Power Point Presentation

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/health/pdfs/LETS-MOVE-presentation.ppt>