

# FWCOC Ministry In-Brief

*A Profile of Ministries at Work*



## 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 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](mailto:bulletin@fwcoc.org)

*Serving and Helping. Teaching and Empowering.*



# FWCOC Ministry In-Brief

*A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## History of the In-Brief—a Direct Linkage to Church History

The FWCOC In-Brief started from an idea that was presented to church leaders and Brother Gary Smith by Brother Karl Spencer. The idea came to Karl after a sermon presented by Gary as he was working on his master's degree and which mentioned his project—a resource center. Gary said, *“there has to be someone in here that has some insight that could use your talents to get involved, especially with information technology.”* This phrase stuck with Karl and sparked ideas at the intersection of his aptitude and talents that could be used to design a way to enhance resource center efforts.

The In-Brief idea was pondered over a few weeks, and, on September 17, 2013, email correspondence was sent to church leaders as a way to follow-up with Gary. Gary liked the idea and Karl scheduled a meeting to review options in October 2013 to prepare, plan, and discuss with church leaders and set a deadline for the first release: March 31, 2014. The initial launch included a resource center website that allowed ministry posts and email campaigns as reminders to all FWCOC members. One way to look at this is to understand the key “take home” message: you get an idea that you think would help; you allow yourself to be used; and you stand prepared to be organized, professional, and cordial, to strive for excellence, to stay on top of it, and to allow God to work!

Today, the In-Brief includes email communication to all subscribed FWCOC members. As new content is released, the previous In-Brief content is archived on the FWCOC website in the resource center section. This archive is available for anyone to read whenever they would like.





# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## In-Brief Ministry

### *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture*

Are people scientists by nature, with a knack for understanding STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) concepts? Should Christians even be concerned about such concepts, that range from architectural marvels to artificial intelligence (AI)? These are fascinating questions to debate, but the simple answer for all Christians should be a resounding yes to both. You don't have to be the all-knowing go-to person for STEM, but having a rational mind regarding the small things will provide a pathway to understanding. After all, everyone must eat, have a basic understanding of where food comes from, and know how to cook at least something.

*"You have some valid points, but I am still not convinced that I am a scientist by nature. I know that I can cook some foods and that chemistry is involved somehow, especially if something burns. Yet you mentioned AI, which I am clueless about, so I just don't see it."* Cooking food is a great example of a chemical change in which the cooked food has been altered chemically and cannot go back to its original state. You may not understand the chemical equation, but you are doing basic chemistry. Whether you realize it or not, you already know that certain things work together but others don't. Try eating something that was cooked with the wrong ingredients – replacing sugar with salt or potatoes with cucumbers – or just imagine how it tastes. As for AI, some say it is starting to take over while others say it isn't, but if you really understood the major concepts of STEM, it would be easy to see how AI could be disruptive to everyday life, yet it will always lack what God can provide: a way to thrive by doing right through infinite combinations of "forks in the road."

In this issue, we will review *FAQs to a Christian* linked to the *Practical Application of Scripture* to associate God's word to the STEM integrated AI world.



<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*

## In-Brief Ministry

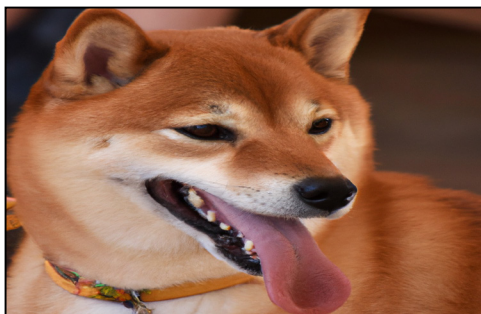
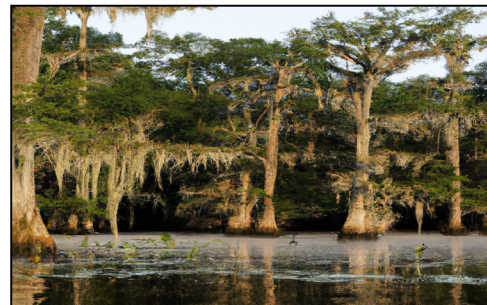
*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### STEM integrated AI Linkages to God

AI seems to be on a lot of minds these days, with changes in social ecosystems across the world and even disruptions to the way people think. But what is AI? According to Merriam-Webster, AI is “a branch of computer science dealing with the simulation of intelligent behavior in computers; the capability of a machine to imitate intelligent human behavior.” It sounds simple, but if you read it carefully, two words stand out that explain that AI is not human but artificial: “simulation” and “imitate.” AI is composed of computer-generated steps, processes, prompts, logic, and cases that work together to perform an action based on data; it is not a new idea, but it is becoming more prevalent in our daily lives. Regardless of what the automated processes actually are, we should look at AI as a way to be more efficient in everyday life.

Another key aspect of AI is who develops the code (programming) and where the datasets “feed” into AI systems originate: human beings. Below is an easy example to help you appreciate this point—a comparison of images captured with a digital camera with images generated by AI. In this case, “generated” means giving a text prompt to an AI site to tell it to create an image rather than searching the internet for a picture from a digital imagery stock site. The prompts used to generate the AI images, in separate submissions, were “Shiba Inu dog resting” and “Caddo Lake.”

Which do you think are the AI-generated images?



<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*

## **In-Brief Ministry**

*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### **Points to Ponder**

Does AI have the ability to create blood or key organs of the body without human intervention using biological samples (cells, tissues, organs) and biochemical reactions that could be interrupted by an infinite number of variables, both natural and man-made?

Can AI self-correct from catastrophic events (hurricanes, severe winter storms, climate change, backup system failures) including the kind of destruction with which God describes the end of the world?

These thoughts should add context to your spiritual toolkit and provide a pathway to helping others who do not understand the true purpose of God's Word.

### **Here's a set of questions that were asked of a member about the Bible and AI**

"I don't consider myself a Christian, but I believe in a higher power and have glanced at the Bible on occasion. I read somewhere that the world will be destroyed by fire. What does this mean? The world is vast, so how can this happen in context? Why should the Bible be the only way to understand what God is trying to tell us about how we should live when it also tells us to expect the world to be gone? We are intelligent beings and can make decisions on our own."

"We are in a STEM-advanced society, and AI seems to be the way to create our path forward. I know the planet is warming and things are changing, but the world has changed before and has always reverted through natural cycles. I don't understand how something could happen that would destroy everything. The Bible seems to be based on old times, and they didn't have what we have now, especially with AI coming along fast. We need newer ideas. Please enlighten me."



<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*

## In-Brief Ministry

*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### A Christian Response

First of all, it is always good to know where the person asking a question is coming from. You mentioned that you read these things somewhere in the Bible, which gives Christians a solid basis to respond. It sounds like you have some respect for the Bible. Christians believe that the Bible is our guide, with prophecies that have been passed on and can be read about in scripture. In addition to these words, archeology and artifacts have confirmed many of the facts stated in the Bible and how the people in the Bible lived at that time.

According to God's word, the world will be destroyed by fire. Do you believe that a catastrophic flood destroyed the world as stated in the Bible? There is scientific evidence that there was a monumental flood, which has been traced and physically proven in several studies, with remains and artifacts found. 2 Peter 3:6-7 describes it as an event *"through which the world at that time was destroyed by being flooded with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people."* If you believe that there was a flood, what does this passage mean to you?

You cannot replace or re-write the Bible using AI. The Bible is true and the content must be handled with care. Can AI order your steps the way God does? I guess it might tell you not to steal, based on principles in the Bible, but if the source dataset missed the word "not," AI would tell you to steal. A phrase like "God created the heavens and the earth" could be changed by AI algorithms to "God did not create the heavens and the earth." Such would be a small mistake, but coders are human, and datasets can become compromised or marginalized. If AI says that there is no God, then that is a human mistake based on what was added to or misunderstood from the source.

Yes, we are in an advanced world, especially with AI. Ecclesiastes 1:9 states that *"What has been, it is what will be, And what has been done, it is what will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun."* Past civilizations have been surprisingly advanced, and scientists still debate how various structures were created. Others are searching for ways to live longer, using technology to understand the body. In both instances, it seems they are trying to replicate nature and to replace God.



<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*

## **In-Brief Ministry**

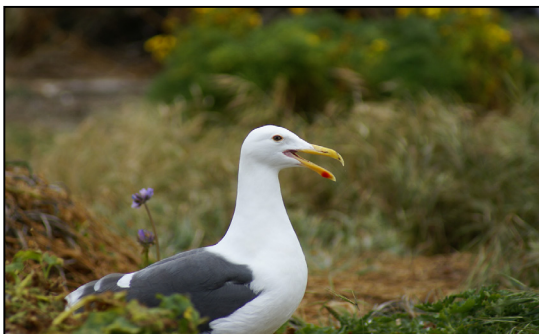
*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### **A Christian Response**

God has done a perfect job of putting together what we all experience on a daily basis; just getting up and being able to breathe is a blessing! Christians believe that God is not against AI and associated technologies, but they understand that it can be used for good or evil. The question remains: how will we use AI? Will we use it to advance the kingdom of God and His teachings? Or will it be used to replace our reliance on God? More specifically, someone has to “feed” AI, meaning that there must be a source of information and logic that must be coded and directly linked for AI to work correctly. The obvious concern then is where that information comes from. Reference lists should be provided for what is being built, designed, and coded into AI generation tools.

As an example, climate change shows how the earth can react when natural processes are disrupted, yet AI cannot control the climate or the sun. Nevertheless, the Bible states that the world will be destroyed by fire. You may ask how this is possible, but then you are ignoring observations of changes over the last 45 years. The sun is essential for plants and photosynthesis, but if you start disrupting or adding to matter and obstacles that block the sun, the earth will suffer the consequences: severe weather, fire, and glacial melting are just a few examples. What if the distance between the sun and the earth were to change drastically? This is a simple, yet extreme, analogy whose consequences would be dire indeed. Yet man thinks he knows what God can or will do, but just a basic understanding of the elements of nature, of reactions and temperature, should give anyone an idea of what can happen if the sun is taken for granted—and AI cannot predict what God has already decided.

You also mentioned that the Bible is based on old times and that we need new ideas. True, the Bible is dated, but this does not make it out of date. It remains true and solid; nothing has changed, just as nothing has changed since creation with how humans need one another or inhale oxygen and release carbon dioxide to stay alive. Think of the Bible as timeless, authentic, and right. There are no new basic concepts under the sun. There may be new conveniences, but look at what humans need to survive and thrive: oxygen, water, food, and genuine, worthwhile, interactive relationships for fellowship.



<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*

## **In-Brief Ministry**

*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### **A Christian Response**

Why do we need new ideas? Christians believe we are made in God's image and after his likeness. We are different from the animals because God made us to rule. We were made to be creative and to use our minds effectively. Our role is not to question God's rule or moral standards or to recreate His laws but to use them to build His kingdom. New ideas, free thinking, plurality, and the postmodern generation in which we live often try to reject God's laws based on feelings—trying to make everything right and nothing we do wrong, regardless of God's law. This is in total defiance of what God calls righteousness. When we try to replace God's law—to discredit His law and make our own—we are really listening to the devil. Productive members of society should therefore be careful about new things and understand that we need to uphold God's law as we create those new things.

Advancing AI and technology can be a good thing for improving our daily lives and continuing to be stewards over what we have been given. Words have meaning, but assembling words using human logic and life experiences will never be sufficient to describe the infinite possibilities and combinations that God encourages Christians to understand.

In essence, everybody is God's creation, but not everyone is a child of God. Being human means that we are God's creation, but He allows us to determine whether or not we will be His children based on our responses to His commands and our alignment with scripture. The only way we can be God's children is if we obey His commands and fall under His charge. So, whether you choose to believe or not determines whether you are His child—or not. We invite anyone to visit our services and events to learn more.



<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

## In-Brief Ministry

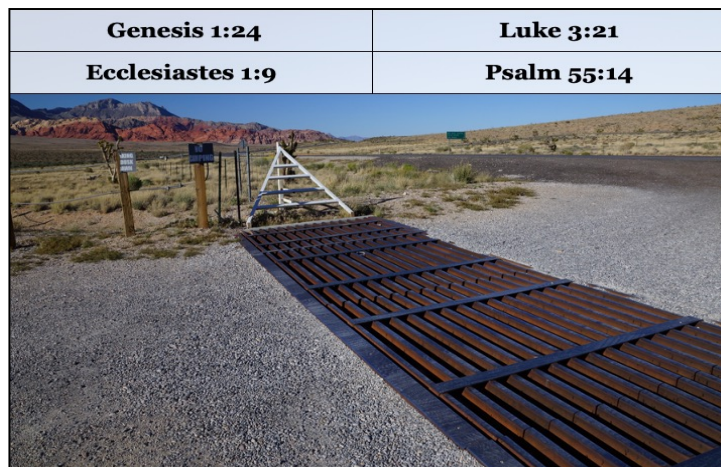
*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

### The Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes: Helping Christians to Maintain their Role as Disciples

We need to be able to determine and discern using our God-given senses, to stay rational, and to use our abilities to connect our knowledge and experiences with scripture. Here's a practical way to help you understand the value of human intelligence and how far we can rely on AI in our lives.

#### Making Connections

How would you apply words, phrases or messages in the *scripture* referenced below to this set of scenes? Justify your responses.



The following are two possible connections based on the Bible (*Source: Bible - New American Standard (NASB)*):

**Genesis 1:24:** The phrase **livestock and crawling things and animals**. *"<sup>24</sup>Then God said, "Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kind: **livestock** and crawling things and animals of the earth according to their kind"; and it was so." The first scene shows what some call a cattle guard, which reminds me of **livestock** based on God's creation. **Livestock** are a part of the animal kingdom and examples are hoofed mammals (cows, bison). Having a cattle guard at key entrance points is man's way of allowing **livestock** to graze freely without causing problems with moving vehicles on major roadways, but providing ways for vehicles to enter the property without having to open a gate.*

**Luke 3:21:** The word **baptized**. *"<sup>21</sup>Now when all the people were **baptized**, Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened." The scene that shows a duck (or waterfowl) going under water reminded me of a **baptism** – not **baptizing** a bird, but an example of submersion in water. Christians believe that a person must be fully submerged to be properly **baptized**. I had to watch it several times to review it and confirm that a full submersion was completed. I do the same when humans are being **baptized** – full submersion.*

<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*

### In-Brief Ministry

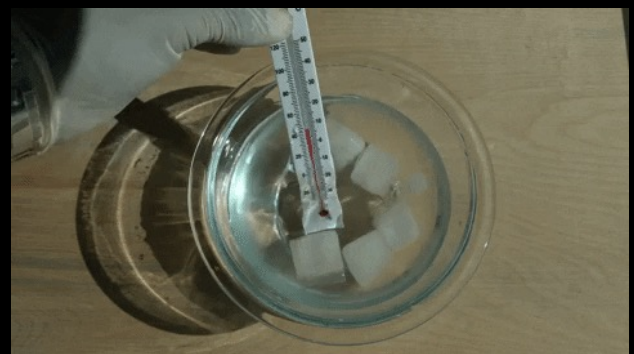
*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to a Christian linkages to the Practical Application of Scripture (Continued)*

Christians should strive to understand the practicality of scripture and the connections to the real world that God created, regardless of what AI might generate – almost like if you have an electric vehicle (EV) or cellular phone but don't know when to plug it into an outlet, but you track the percent of the battery when you need to re-charge. Then, you find out that the cable doesn't work when it worked only days before.

Staying with God allows you to bypass the fray and always stay re-charged by relying on scripture and prayer, not worldly objects, to alert you during your journey among the vast number of practical applications in the world.

Grace and Blessings,

The In-Brief Ministry



**Psalm 55:**<sup>14</sup> "We who had sweet fellowship together, Walked in the house of God among the commotion." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** In-Brief.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

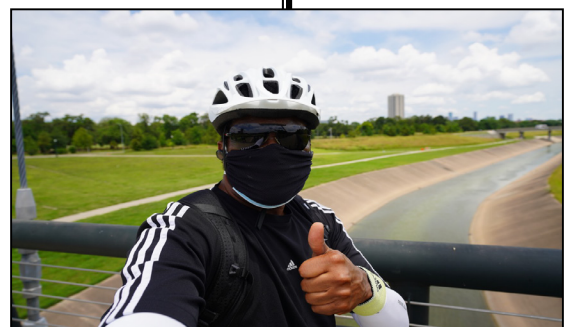
*I think I've got it back; now what?*

As Christians, do our “trials and tribulations” matter? Are they subjective or the same across different personalities? What are trials and tribulations? Merriam-Webster defines a trial as “a test of faith, patience, or stamina through subjection to suffering or temptation” and a tribulation as “distress or suffering resulting from oppression or persecution” or “a trying experience”; together, they are “difficult experiences, problems, etc.”

*“Those are great definitions, but we all have trials and tribulations, and most Christians have grown enough to get past them; we understand tests and growth.”* True, but try thinking about a circumstance in which you lost something and thus became more focused—able to see what you had left and able to adapt to the changes so your journey could continue. Imagine it as a weather event in which you lost physical items but there was a way to repair or re-purchase them and thus get them back. Most people have been impacted by some sort of weather event, regardless of where they live. One sees the devastation and how others are either trying to define and understand the loss or saying, “Oh well, I guess I don’t own it anymore, but my life is more important, and things can be replaced.”

*“That’s great, but what do the trials and tribulations of weather events have to do with my health and wellness goals?”* They are an analogy for rejuvenation, renewal, and growth—for striving to keep what you have regained alongside changes within the body that may be unseen. Such physical changes within the body and efforts to maintain them can be like weather events, but the destruction is hidden, leaving clues in test results or chronic pain. Our mental and physical health and wellness can be just as catastrophic as weather events that you have physically viewed or experienced.

In this issue, we will review various ways to maintain your fitness and be your own health and wellness advocate, with support from your healthcare advocate teams—medical professionals, knowledgeable friends, and relatives.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*I think I've got it back; now what? (Continued)*

### **I think I've got it back; now what?**

How do you really know if you have “it” back? That depends on what goals you set. Being out of shape or unfit or eating things you know you shouldn’t, which are under your control, are unnecessary trials and tribulations that tax your physical and mental wellness as you seek to regain and maintain your fitness. You find yourself facing obstacles—excuses, genetics, procrastination, or a busy schedule—and nothing seems to change. All of these impact your wellness habits, sometimes through no fault of your own or through ignorance or simple neglect. You may have physical or mental scars that explain why you behave as you do, but trials and tribulations often allow you to enter the lives of people with whom you would never have had contact. You can use this and continue with your journey to maintain your wellness program.

One way to know if you have regained “it” is comments from others. People may look at you differently, notice changes, ask what you have been doing, mention that you have lost weight, or say that you look different “in a good way; not that you were in a bad way...” A good response is to tell them that you set a goal to get “it” back with God’s help. The conversation can then move to why you wanted to get “it” back, the pathway to doing so, and God’s role in your perseverance.



### **Being your own health advocate**

One question you should ask yourself is “Am I my own health advocate?” The answer should be “yes,” because you are taking care of something over which God has made you a steward. You don’t have to be a scientist or healthcare professional to be your own health advocate; just be organized and informed as you build your health advocate awareness teams. Gather support from objective health advocates who won’t panic when a crisis occurs or when news arrives that is hard to hear. Nevertheless, it is up to you to maintain your own records and know your health status when you visit healthcare facilities. You don’t have to understand everything, but you should keep a medical and dietary history easily available.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*I think I've got it back; now what? (Continued)*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a growing body of evidence shows that people with higher patient activation (i.e., the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become actively engaged in their own health care) have better health outcomes. Most of those who experienced the yearly 5K walk have stated that it was a way to re-energize their efforts toward overall physical and mental well-being. Good next steps are to develop a schedule that includes yearly health checks and to become your own health and wellness advocate, with a team of support advocates.

With few exceptions, you can't rely on healthcare professionals to be at your beck-and-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your entire life. We experience various nicks and hurdles along the way, but you can be flexible, adapt to reality, and keep moving or maintaining what you have. It is not about trying to be something you aren't, but about maintaining the body and "watering" the spirit, which can be aided by health advocate teams.

### **Tips to becoming your own health advocate and utilizing health advocate teams**

It is good to have practical examples; some examples of how to be your own health advocate include the following:

**Communicate with healthcare professionals (including primary care physicians).** Talk to them; if they don't listen, ask an advocate to help, including your insurance company, which can help you get results, even if it means getting a new primary care physician who will refer you to specialists. However, you shouldn't allow the insurance company to schedule you at clinics without your input. The key is to be organized enough to show health professionals that you are serious and to answer the questions they ask.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*I think I've got it back; now what? (Continued)*

**Keep medical records.** Keep records of medical tests and health visits. Have a secure binder or file—electronic or hardcopy—that contains your latest summary data and key exam results. If you decide to use a medical MyChart, for example, make sure your records are updated across institutions.

**Attend yearly health checks.** You must stay on top of your own health and take charge. You do not have to feel pain in order to do health checks. Regular checkups and screenings should be a part of the process of getting "it" back and maintaining your overall wellness. If your physician only runs routine test panels, check for additional tests that you may want done from your own research that may not be part of a standard panel. A test for vitamin D is a good example of a non-standard test, and some have discovered that they have low vitamin D.

**Manage stress.** Find ways to keep stress in check. Researchers have shown the benefits of just getting away and experiencing nature to clear your mind, so try to leave and simply “check out” for a while; especially good are overnight experiences in the wilderness among God’s creation. Spending time outdoors, away from everything, can be a sort of prescription: in nature, away from your home, but somewhere safe. Take your cell phone—just in case and to avoid worry—but don’t use it. In fact, practice not using it while you are away. Keep it in silent mode and refuse to look at it—after all, what can be so important that only you, out in the wilderness, can solve it?



**Know your family history.** It is not your choice which family you are born into, but you do need to accept it. Family members may not know all the correct terms for the inherited issues you may face, but they may be able to describe generational conditions.

**Do research.** Research what is being done to you; if a healthcare professional or someone with experience says you have a “condition,” don’t accept it until they tell you why and how they came to that conclusion. Then, work with your advocate teams to validate the results and to ask next-step questions or even to see a specialist to get a second “objective” opinion. This is not about being in denial but about understanding what your doctor is trying to communicate so your advocates can support you in making decisions, including certain yearly timeframes where society is promoting health events. Diabetes is a good example as there are several people that could tell you insights that range from your optometrist to a family member that has tracked this disease across generations. Also, make sure to use sites for your research that are backed by empirical research—governments, medical institutions, and renowned universities—for your research.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*I think I've got it back; now what? (Continued)*

When you do all you can and keep your steps ordered, God will be in control. He may put obstacles or people in place to stop you from doing things that would interrupt your journey and impact your wellness goals; yet, when God moves, you should move along with Him because He is answering your prayers.



**Romans 5:1-5:** <sup>1</sup>"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup>through whom we also have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we celebrate in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>And not only *this*, but we also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup>and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup>and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*Can I get it Back?*

Have you ever looked in the mirror and asked yourself, can I get “it” back? The answer, of course, depends on what “it” is; the “it” needs to have a defined focus to determine whether you can truly get “it” back. In this case, let’s focus on an “it” that impacts all living systems: staying well and fit.

If we look at changes in animals and plants over time, whether one can get wellness and fitness back depends on what has changed and how it was changed (parts removed, chemical changes). A good example is petrified wood, which was once a thriving tree, but through various processes over time has become petrified—altered chemically. In this case, thousands of years of processes have changed the wood to another state, but leaving remnants of the physical appearance of the tree.



*"So, what does an old piece of wood have to do with getting fitness back? And what if I don't want to get it back because I don't like exercising?"* The short unjustified answer that some people want to hear is "Absolutely! You can get your fitness back to where it was!" The long justified answer is that, just as a petrified log was once a living tree but has been chemically altered over time and cannot go back to normal processing (intake of carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen), such permanent changes can also occur with people. Chemical processes, from inhaling oxygen and exhaling carbon dioxide to digesting food, occur in the human body daily, but if something disrupts these processes and alters the body's normal equilibrium state, one can lose the ability to get "it" back. The rational answer is, "it depends."

In this issue, we will review ways to help you align with your overall wellness goals, while striving to get "it" back.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*Can I get it Back? (Continued)*

### What is a good first step to getting “it” back?

Many individuals changed their exercise routines during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and are now slowly trying to find ways to get “it” back. One of the most common bodily functions at the forefront of people’s minds is breathing, which is directly linked to aerobic activities. What is aerobic activity? According to Merriam-Webster, *aerobic* describes something that is “*living, active, or occurring only in the presence of oxygen; of, relating to, or being activity which increases the body’s demand for oxygen, thereby resulting in marked temporary increase in respiration and heart rate.*” Typical aerobic activities include walking, jogging, swimming, aerobics, cycling, and hiking. To survive and continue to thrive, we must inhale a level of oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, yet breathing and oxygenated cells are often taken for granted as we go on with our daily lives and walk with God.

The first step on the road to getting “it” back is to determine what you can work into your daily routine consistently; you should then check with your physician for any concerns and finally start your new routine.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), walking is a great way to get the physical activity needed to obtain health benefits and forces you to get the heart rate up and breathe. Walking does not require any special skills, and a single bout of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity can improve sleep, memory, and the ability to think and learn. It also reduces anxiety symptoms. Activities like walking, running, or anything that makes one’s heart beat faster within a target heart rate range for at least 20 minutes without stopping at least 3 days a week are considered a desirable standard. Aerobic exercise is often credited with improving mood, and research suggests that it may help to improve memory and other mental functions as well.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Can I get it Back? (Continued)*

Sometimes, it is good to have an example of a routine to understand options to getting "it" back. Here are some responses from a member who follows a focused regimen in conjunction with a hectic schedule.

**Do you consider yourself very active?** I do, but not as much as I would like to be. I sit at a desk in front of large computer screens all day and have to allow for breaks to walk, breathe, stand, and give my eyes a distance workout. I'm not a personal trainer and don't have control of everything I would need to be 99 percent on-point for fitness, but I know enough to do 90 percent of what I need to do, based on my schedule. I do sign up for personal training at least once every year to review any new routines that I could do to help me stay motivated and active.

**Do you have any health concerns that may prevent you from doing aerobic activity?** Not really, but I do have allergies—pollen and grasses—that can prohibit certain outdoor activities. These allergies only impact me while I'm in Texas. My workaround is to wear a mask fitted for athletic activities to block particles, like pollen and other irritants. When I visit places like California, Wyoming, Hawaii, or Florida, I have no problems being outside and all my allergies stop. So, I took note of my limitations and found a workaround, avoiding excuses or obstacles so I can continue to strive for excellence and meet my weekly goals.

**How do you maintain the recommended aerobic activity levels with a hectic schedule?** By putting exercise on the schedule and scheduling around it. Examples would be cycling and walking the dogs. I have very active dogs that need to be walked 2–3 times a day 7 days a week—more than just letting them out in the backyard. In the mornings, I am forced to get up, get workout clothes on, grab the dog backpack, and get moving with the dogs for 30 minutes on the trail, which provides a way to get vigorous exercise in the morning with a level of aerobic activity. I try to do a 30-minute walk at least once a day with the dogs on a trail. If, for some reason, I miss the morning walk, I catch up in the evening.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Can I get it Back? (Continued)*

I go cycling on a bike trail at least once a week for 45 to 90 minutes, usually on Saturdays and more if I can during the week. I ride on the trail to avoid interruptions and so I don't have to deal with vehicles and can focus and relax. Whether it is cycling or dog walking, I take my headset and listen to spiritual songs. Doing this provides a great way to connect with God and meet my aerobic activity goals while enjoying nature.

**How do you prepare, and how do you feel after these activities?** For walking the dogs, I have everything I need ready for when I wake up, so I can change into my workout gear quickly and get the dogs and get going. So, no real preparation there. Dog walks always provide a break from monotony because I have to control very active dogs while walking on a trail with other dogs and people.

For cycling, I usually carb-up at least 12 hours before I go. I typically choose a "cheat meal," as most trainers would call it. This provides the chemical energy needed to maintain a steady pace for at least 45 minutes. One thing I will say is that if I don't go cycling or do something to get my aerobic activity for the week, it has an impact and it feels like I missed something. This shows that my body has become conditioned to going out and being active. Once you condition your body, you don't feel exhausted after aerobic activity.

I have also noticed more mental clarity as I push unwanted distractors out of my mind, and when I finish, I feel re-energized. I've noticed that my breathing flows better, my sinuses clear, stressors fade, and my eyes stop being tired from looking at a computer screen. I feel re-invigorated as the oxygenated blood flows to my brain.

**What is one of your most memorable experiences that you really felt had an impact on your aerobic activity?** Walking trails at higher elevations in Yellowstone National Park with a backpack and camera gear. That gives you a workout, but you need some conditioning in order to do the steep climbs. I remember the amount of breathing and perspiration and saying to myself, "I thought I was in shape for this!" Typically, walking on a treadmill with elevation is almost the same as walking outdoors, but you can get off a treadmill at any point. You can't just "get off" a 5-mile outdoor trail; you have to finish it.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*Can I get it Back? (Continued)*

**What would be your recommendation to anyone who doesn't want to do aerobic activities or other ways to get it back?** Check with your physician and ask them about options for increasing your aerobic activity to get any obstacles out of your mind. Stop making excuses and decide to get active. Find a place you feel safe, and if you don't have a trail or a place outdoors where you feel safe, use a space inside of your house and get an exercise video to guide you. If you can't stand, you can sit in a chair and do something that will help improve your aerobic conditioning. I would also recommend attending the yearly FWCOC 5K Walk.

One thing that is extremely helpful is having a device to track progress and record the health impacts. That device will remind you during the day. From walking, cycling and standing to breathing exercises, the device can be programmed and will alert you with a vibration, ping, email, text message or phone call to hold you accountable. Doing this provides a way to see trends and any health changes that may impact your overall fitness goals.



### **The FWCOC 5K Walk**

If you are interested in getting something started on your way to getting "it" back, making plans to attend the annual FWCOC 5K walk will help you get invigorated and give you a reason to get moving. Simply walking with other Christians as a group makes it stimulating and makes you want to do more. If you haven't seen the schedule for the FWCOC 5K walk, please visit [www.fwcoc.org](http://www.fwcoc.org) for updates.

**Genesis 2:7:** "Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living person." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Men's Ministry

### *Recover—What, How, and When, Part I*

“Recover” is a word that has meaning across societal boundaries, but what does it really mean? Merriam-Webster describes it in various ways, including “to get back: regain; to bring back to normal position or condition; to save from loss and restore to usefulness.” These are great definitions, but what does “recover” really mean to the life of a Christian?

A practical example is exercise (*cardio, strength training, flexibility, balance*) recovery. Everyone exercises their muscles, whether by walking from the kitchen to the front door or doing eight miles of cardio per week. If you don't exercise regularly and then do everything at once, you will feel sore.

People who work out consistently have learned that the body goes through a recovery phase as you exercise different muscles during strength training or cardio activity. Trainers often refer to this phase as muscle recovery. You know you will be sore at some point after a workout, but it always gets better as your muscles and lungs start to strengthen and become accustomed to various exercises. Even after an unexpected injury, the body is always trying to recover. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), “exercise-induced muscle damage typically results in impaired performance, increased pain and soreness, and reduced training quality. Athletes and active individuals who require rapid recovery between bouts of damaging exercise/physical activity should implement well-supported nutritional and supplementation strategies to augment and assist with the recovery process.” *Source: NIH.gov.*

Is our spiritual wellness any different from physical recovery? As things scratch, dent, strain, trip up, or even wreck (impossible if you stick with God) your spirit, we should look at God's way as a non-physical recovery plan that always works. Join us as we kick off the Men's Ministry series, which started with a conference that allowed men to experience presentations, sessions, and fellowship with like-minded Christian men.



<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part I (Continued)*

### What did men think about conference experiences?

This series starts with a few responses from FWCOC conference participants, leading to practical ways for implementation.

*"First of all I thank Almighty God for his Devine purpose and guidance that he has placed upon FWCOC and its leadership to equip the saints to fulfill the call and mission of the church. The men's conference, not retreat, ("No Surrender No Retreat"), was an eye opener for many and a call to action for some, I love the fact that so many young brothers participated and were impacted by this workshop and I would like you to know how much the FWCOC is impacting the conference and other congregations as well, by demonstrating your commitment to the development of the men in the church. Know for certain that what you do here in Houston, has a far reaching affect on the body of Christ, throughout the brotherhood (a city that is set on a hill..)"*

*"I am definitely coming next year and wish we had this more often. Met some great people and heard some great ways to help manage myself and forgive myself. Definitely a work in progress but everyday is a new day."*

*"To My Brethren: Your investment in our conference participation is invaluable to our focus on promoting growth amongst our congregation and the extended brotherhood of believers. Brethren from other congregations commended our participation and were encouraged to share our participation approach with their congregations. I am hopeful that our brothers are motivated and empowered to increase our works. Hopefully, we will expand our investments in these higher-efficacy activities."*

*"I decided to attend as part of my spiritual goals for the year, to reconnect and/or make connections with the men at FWCOC since it decreased since covid. The conference was very informative and I feel this was a blessing because it was the spiritual food I needed. Also, meeting other COC men from across the country was very beneficial. I learned other churches to visit when I travel. Last, I connected with so many men from FWCOC. To me, this was a blessing. Thanks again to the Elders and Bro. Hamilton for the conference registration, setting up this retreat and providing the logistics. My spirit NEEDED this experience. If this opportunity is presented again in the future, I will definitely participate and will attempt to bring other men with me."*

*"Just want to express my appreciation to you and our leadership for helping us attend the Men's Conference. The information, bonding, studying and applying of GOD's word was uplifting, encouraging and inspiring. It challenged all of us to be better Christian men, husbands and fathers. I know we are all better for it."*

*"I think this was a worthwhile experience, It was my first conference I've participated in despite being a part of the body of Christ for more than 30 years. Like some professional conferences, this conference re-energized me to do better in life, Additionally. With some of the topics I gained an internal review of myself and was able to share and discuss issues that we typically share in common but don't discuss openly with others."*

<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part I (Continued)*

### What did men think about conference experiences?

*"I needed to get closer to God while understanding his word and my purpose in life. Getting the opportunity to meet men from different areas of the United States helped me see everyone's struggles. I needed this retreat to help me become a better husband and father. I gained knowledge in learning how to study the bible and relate the lessons to my life. In the next few months, my goal is to invite more people to FWCOC in hopes to teach God's word and use it as a tool to motivate their life and become better men."*

*"I went to the conference to develop as a Man. Development-I became more aware of God's glory and purpose for my life. I also learned how to be vulnerable. It was a life changing experience that I needed in my life."*

*"This was my first year attending the conference. The conference was a much needed revival. The speakers hit topics that I had on my mind that I literally felt 'I am the only one dealing with this.'" Encouraging does not capture the experience. Challenging, encouraging, and spiritually nurturing are a few of the words I would use to describe. Practical lessons that left me on fire to go to work in the Kingdom by serving in the church and serving my family. God is awesome. Please thank the elders for subsidizing this event. Thank you for organizing. I've said enough but it has truly been a blessing."*

*This was an experience I will never forget. The brothers at FWCOC only grow in numbers as more men choose to attend. We were blessed to bring home an award with the most men attending from our church. The goal now is to increase attendance each year."*

*"Bro. Hamilton, First, to God be the glory; I would like to say that this was a great conference. It is so wonderful to see so many brother in Christ showing their vulnerabilities which only proved how strong we actually are. I would like to thank FWCOC for opening the door and making this possible. The cost of this conference and all it's parts obviously had to be far more than the amount we paid to attend. It was God and the Holy Spirit in me that moved me to attend this conference. The friendships and knowledge of our struggle are the things I am taking away most from this conference. Knowing I am not alone in my struggle and that there are brothers in a ear shout that are there for me, willing to help me is knowledge gained and retained. This experience is more than worthwhile.....it is healthy (brothers in Christ just being men) and life touching (Iron sharpening Iron).....something all men of Christ need to experience."*

Participants experienced several great takeaways including what it means to continue "forward" allowing God to order your steps. In Part II, we will explore the various paths to an all-encompassing recovery.

**Ezekiel 38:8** <sup>8</sup>"After many days you will be called to arms. In future years you will invade a land that has recovered from war, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate. They had been brought out from the nations, and now all of them live in safety." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Men's Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** William Hamilton.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **Men's Ministry**

### *Recover—What, How, and When, Part II*

Have you ever wondered what happens to water in the aftermath of a rainstorm? Water goes through several phases that involve physical changes, and the most noticeable part of this water cycle is rain. In the Houston area, most of us are familiar with bayous as a part of the channel system across the city. When it rains, activity in the bayous becomes a focus, as flowing water seeks to make its way to the ocean—in the case of Texas, this is the Gulf of Mexico. However, if water flows are blocked, various consequences begin to emerge.



*“All of this is great, and we know about water cycles, but what does water in a channel system have to do with recovery and my journey?”* As you begin to think strategically, the answer becomes clear: “Everything.”

Should we think of ourselves as water channel systems that God uses to relay information to others? Or do we block God's plan for ordering our steps once it reaches us? Consider how the flow of water relates to God's way of connecting with us during our journey. We can choose to be a channel or conduit, letting the blessings pass through (or over) us, and “grab,” “pick up,” or “snatch” the instructions intended for us as those blessings flow by. Or we can choose to block the blessings intended for someone else by getting in the way and trying to intervene. This could cause a major buildup, flooding the mind with unwanted consequences caused by getting in the way and not understanding the strategy in God's plan. If God cannot strategically send a blessing through you, how can you expect Him to send a blessing to you? Strategic thinking provides a way for us to be drenched in blessings versus getting in the way and being drowned in blockages. In Part II of the Men's Ministry series, we highlight the idea of “A Strategic Recovery.”



<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part II (Continued)*

### **A Strategic Recovery: Uncovering pathways to an all-encompassing recovery**

Have you ever considered a recovery to be strategic? What exactly does strategic mean? According to Merriam-Webster, a strategy is “a careful plan or method; the art of devising or employing plans” and strategic is defined as “of, relating to, or marked by strategy; necessary to or important in the initiation, conduct, or completion of a strategic plan.” A strategic recovery should be viewed as an ongoing wellness plan that you implement to stay aligned with God’s word. If things go south—or north—with a normal day’s activities, interactions with people, relationships, or just being you, you should always strive to stay aligned with your strategic recovery plan as a way to maintain an all-encompassing recovery. You don’t always need to have a problem in order to review recovery efforts. Consider having strategic recovery plan “drills”; doing so provides a pathway that entails a self-assessment linked to a reconnaissance across any experience. Here’s a practical view, as offered by a session participant, which provides additional insights that lead to strategic thinking.

*“The theme of this year’s retreat was **“No surrender; No retreat.”** We were reminded that with the Lord on our side, the devil cannot have victory over us and to remember that our war was not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places. We were given many examples from the Old Testament about the power of our undefeated God. A few examples given included Gideon’s defeat of the Midianites with only 300 men; Elisha being rescued by the chariots of fire; Moses and the Israelites fleeing from Pharaoh and escaping by God dividing the Red Sea; and the falling of the walls of Jericho after the three circles around the walled city. Each of these examples is proof of the power of God working through faithful men.*

*Each speaker encouraged us with God’s word. We were reminded of scriptures for the type of spirit that God has given to us. In 2 Timothy 1:7 and Romans 8:37-38, God has given us the spirit of power, love, and a sound mind and that nothing can separate us from the love of God through Jesus. It was discussed from the standpoint of fully tapping into this “power” to stay drenched and saturated in the word. We were encouraged that to be so saturated takes intention and planning.*

*We were reminded that struggling is a part of life for everyone. With God’s love and power, we can overcome the devil and not surrender or retreat. We must always seek victory over the craftiness of the devil and be able to see our victory and trust that God will carry us through.*

*Lastly, we were challenged to live our lives making the decision to do the best things for the objects of our love, regardless of their response to us, regardless of whether they deserve our love or that love is even reciprocated.*

*I plan to meet this challenge and believe that if I do, I will be a better husband, brother, father, sharer of the word, and friend.*

*Based on my experience, I encourage all brothers to join us for fellowship and study at the next Men’s Retreat (Conference, Summit). I appreciate the Leadership and their understanding of the potential benefits to the men of our congregation, young and old. My bus ride had great brotherhood interaction, the hotel was spectacular, the food was very tasty, and the speakers this year were four amazing brothers from four different states who shared God’s word with us. My entire experience was very enriching.”*

**<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part II (Continued)*

A strategic recovery plan provides a quick reference guide to reach a sound mind as life happens around you, but you continue to fellowship and stay aligned with God. In Part III, we will review the results of a sound mind leading to notable achievements.



**2 Timothy 1:7** “<sup>7</sup> For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Men's Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** William Hamilton.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **Men's Ministry**

### *Recover—What, How, and When, Part III*

Have you ever been told that you were overly confident by someone without the experience to understand your background? If you stop to think about it, how can someone even be overly confident? It is wise to consider the source when someone admits that they don't understand how you do what you do, while "birds" continue to fly in your head and you move with passion, vision and purpose and they cannot keep up. They often don't understand the background, real-world challenges, and educational experiences that have shaped your values and mindset. They surely don't understand your walk with God.

Christians use "spiritual toolkits" as a way to remain confident and, through prayer, have faith that things will move forward regardless of circumstances. Even when you don't completely understand something, you can rely on God to help see you through. God helps you use your gifts and talents to move across unknown territory. Instead of allowing your confidence to be misunderstood, overridden or overruled, always strive to do what is under your control, to maintain a sound mind, and to be logical, rational, faithful, prayerful, and steadfast in your endeavors.

Staying aligned with God gives us the power to: navigate through life, recover from varying experiences, and get back up again. These were just a few points discussed with like-minded Christian men during the Men's Retreat-Conference-Summit (Men's Event.)



In Part III of the Men's Ministry series, we review the notable achievements one can make when one maintains a sound mind.

<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*

## Men's Ministry

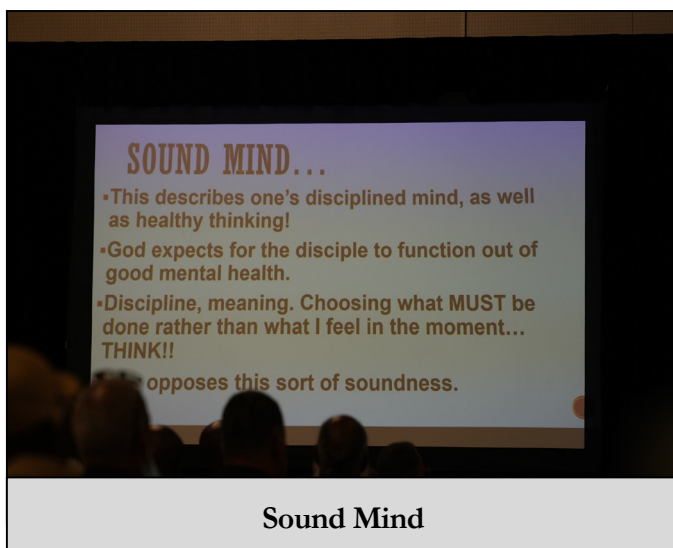
*Recover—What, How, and When, Part III (Continued)*

### A Sound Mind in Modern Society

Can people be considered a "random mix" of characteristics? Or do most people share a common psychological make-up of capabilities and circumstances? While many people do share similar backgrounds, such as where they grew up and how they were educated, varying experiences shape their views on life. This leads to different viewpoints on key tasks and ideas and often results in people approaching problems with an attitude of "that's easy" or "that's nothing special; I can do it myself."

Some researchers posit that this way of thinking is caused by a lack of critical thinking skills and the inability to understand how to solve problems, answer difficult questions, and be rational when communicating with others. Others believe that everyone thinks that they can effectively solve problems or answer questions. Regardless, it is clear that while both education and experience play a key role in today's society, the most effective thinking is led by having a sound mind that is grounded physically, mentally, and spiritually.

What does it mean to have a sound mind? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, being "of sound mind" is defined as being "sane or rational." Furthermore, "rational" is defined as "having reason or understanding" or "relating to, based on, or agreeable to reason." The Bible references the outcome of having a sound mind in multiple ways, but a practical, applied example was noted during an interview that was an outgrowth of the Men's Event. The interviewer asked subject-specific questions to Brother DeMarkus Hodge, an intellectually sound and enthusiastic individual who set aside time to experience the Men's Event and contribute to the follow-up discussions.



Sound Mind



Brother DeMarkus Hodge

<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part III (Continued)*

### **Give me four words (or phrases) that describe you:**

**Faith in God (Christian belief in God):** Have faith in God and believe in yourself, because you know what it means.

**Athleticism:** Keep the body fit and know its importance for overall health and wellness.

**Intellect:** Understand, think critically, be rational, and apply concepts across disciplines.

**Compassion:** Be friendly to people, giving them the same respect that I want to receive, and make people feel comfortable around one another.

### **Give me the history of your educational background by “walking backward,” so we can understand how you matriculated across the years.**

I am currently (12/2022) pursuing a Ph.D. in chemical engineering at the University of North Dakota with a focus on computational fluid dynamics with linkages to programming and simulations. One reason I decided to pursue this area is because I found that computational analysis was a weak area in my studies, and I therefore wanted to fill the gaps. Prior to starting my Ph.D., I obtained a master's degree in nuclear engineering, with a focus on experimental design projects in the laboratory, from Texas A&M University. Before that, I obtained a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, with a minor in mathematics and nuclear engineering, from Texas A&M University, Kingsville. I became interested in pursuing nuclear engineering at this time. I grew up in a military family and spent my freshman and sophomore years of high school in California. However, I spent my junior and senior years in Portugal, where I had the opportunity to travel to several nearby countries, including France, Italy, Germany, and England.

**What got you interested in science, and have you always been interested in science?** Yes, I have always been interested in science. In Portugal, my high school was small and provided opportunities for various teacher–student projects because the teachers taught multiple subjects. One teacher did an experiment on super saturation using sugar and water. Sugar is dissolved into water until no more can be dissolved, then you heat it up so you can dissolve more. When a super saturated solution gets disturbed, it crystallizes, which piqued my interest in chemistry. I didn't want to be a math teacher or a chemistry teacher but instead combined the two into chemical engineering.



<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part III (Continued)*

**What is your greatest strength?** Communication, especially when working in teams. Teamwork allows you to tackle more challenging projects than working alone does. You get to exchange ideas and new information, talk, listen, and debate to achieve a common goal.

**What is your greatest weakness?** Pride. Allowing yourself to learn lessons and permitting others to witness you being humble can get you further than you can get on your own.

**What motivates you?** My family. My mom is working on her Ph.D. in nursing, and my dad has a Ph.D. in microbiology. My sister is attending law school. Several people have helped me understand what it will take to reach my goals and why a certain level of education is important. I measure success by the number of people who love me rather than by the amount of money I have.

**What would you tell students in secondary education who are not certain about their career options?** First, envision what kind of life you want to live. Think 10–20 years ahead. Then, understand what career fields may be the most beneficial for you to go into. Understand what you're passionate about or what you don't mind doing and which suits your future lifestyle, then stay consistent. I got to where I am through the church and through consistency—not only in education, but in my spiritual life as well.

**How important do you think the fellowship component of being a Christian is for your overall success?** I think fellowship with Christians is extremely important, and I will double down on that. Initially, I wanted to do everything on my own, but I soon learned that it is much harder to do things alone than together, from keeping your faith strong to working on projects to dealing with family matters. Most problems can be easily solved if you work as a team. Fellowship is important in my life because I lost a parent while I was in college. Fellowship keeps me accountable. It ensures that my faith is strong and allows me to help other people.



<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*

## Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part III (Continued)*

**Do you have any questions for the interviewer?** Yes; I am struggling with where I fit into the FWCOC in terms of gifts and talents and how they can be used. How did you become the FWCOC “journalist”?

**Answer.** Well, journalist is an interesting term. I would say that I am the In-Brief administrator and facilitator, seeking to highlight the various ministries and to encourage all to get involved. First, you have to listen to what people are asking for, but it has to be something you really like to do. It's not about doing something just to be doing something.

Here's an example that will help you and others on how the In-Brief was started to show how to apply your gifts and talents to work for God, when nothing else matters.

*The In-Brief started from an idea that was presented to church leaders and Brother Gary Smith by Brother Karl Spencer. The idea came to Karl after a sermon presented by Gary as he was working on his master's degree and which mentioned his project—a resource center. Gary said, “there has to be someone in here that has some insight that could use your talents to get involved, especially with information technology.” This phrase stuck with Karl and sparked ideas at the intersection of his aptitude and talents that could be used to design a way to enhance resource center efforts.*

*The In-Brief idea was pondered over a few weeks, and, on September 17, 2013, email correspondence was sent to church leaders as a way to follow-up with Gary. Gary liked the idea and Karl scheduled a meeting to review options in October 2013 to prepare, plan, and discuss with church leaders and set a deadline for the first release: March 31, 2014. The initial launch included a resource center website that allowed ministry posts and email campaigns as reminders to all FWCOC members.*

*One way to look at this is to understand the key “take home” message: you get an idea that you think would help; you allow yourself to be used; and you stand prepared to be organized, professional, and cordial, to strive for excellence, to stay on top of it, and to allow God to work! So this is how anyone can move, shape and form something from their inherent gifts and talents to bring glory to God.*

*Today, the In-Brief includes email communication to all subscribed FWCOC members. As new content is released, the previous In-Brief content is archived on the FWCOC website in the resource center section. This archive is available for anyone to read whenever they would like.*

Ultimately, striving to do your part to maintain a sound mind can be very rewarding if you truly stay aligned with God. Kudos to all the men who experienced the Men's Event, including the follow-up assignments, tasks, and discussions. Part III concludes our Men's Ministry series.

<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*

### Men's Ministry

*Recover—What, How, and When, Part III (Continued)*

Starting in 2023, the In-Brief will be expanded and sent out as a unique set or series each quarter. You should, therefore, expect more exciting insights across ministry efforts.

Thanks to all members, guests, and friends of members who take the time to experience the FWCOC In-Brief.

Grace,

*The In-Brief Ministry*



**Corinthians 5:12-13:** “<sup>12</sup>We are not commending ourselves to you again, but *are* giving you an opportunity to be proud of us, so that you will have *an answer* for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. <sup>13</sup>For if we have lost our minds, *it is* for God; if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Men's Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** William Hamilton.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Security Ministry

*Are you Secure?*

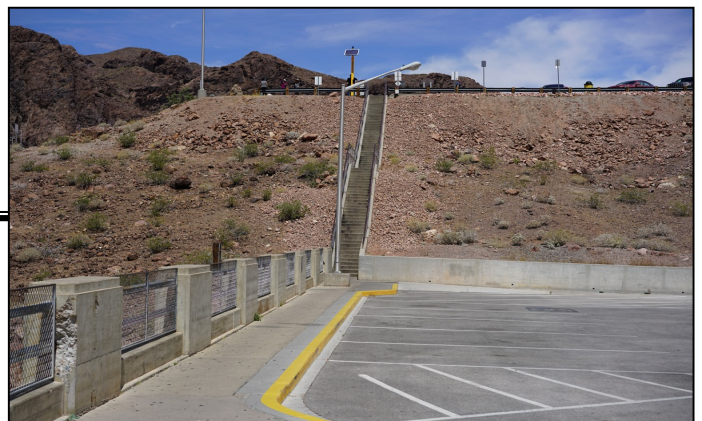
Have you ever taken an assessment of the things you own? What they mean to you and how to safeguard them? Even with so-called safeguards, have you experienced something being stolen from you? If so, how did you respond? *"This is all great, but what does it have to do with me and the possessions that I own and protecting them from thieves? Houston is known to be the 4th largest city in the United States. I know theft has to occur somewhere and I have alarms, so theft is beyond my control, but what can I do?"* Strive to stay secure as you implement God's plan for your life.

Theft occurs every day in this world, but we should not let it distract us from our journey. We should adopt the mindset of "okay, this theft occurred; what are my next steps and what changes do I need to make?" As Christians, we feel safe under God's "lifetime warranty" while on earth, but we need to be cognizant of the attacks and roadblocks of the physical world. Material possessions sometimes feel like a threat as we try to protect assets, which only have value on Earth. We should never let a loss (stolen by any means) of material objects scratch or taint our spirit. One thing you can be assured of is that the security ministry strives to keep you safe during church services and events.

### Security at the Church and Away from the Church, Explored

Am I safe the minute I park my vehicle at the church? Yes, you are safe, and you should feel comfortable coming to church services because the security ministry will focus on keeping you and the church's property and buildings safe with plans and responses. Members don't know who is conducting security, but you should feel safe as the team is overseeing church events.

The security ministry is active in the church and works in conjunction with security professionals to help maintain security during activities both inside and outside of the church buildings. They keep track of everything, from monitoring parking lots to overseeing building areas. Not everything is made public when it comes to security, but you should rest assured that the security ministry is highly skilled and works in concert with uniformed officers to keep everyone safe.



<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*

## Security Ministry

*Are you Secure? (Continued)*

You may want to ask these questions: What happens when I drive off church property and return to different areas across the city? What can I do during the week to stay secure? The main thing is to stay vigilant and avoid distractions. It is always good to hear a story to help with understanding, and the following story relates to practical approaches to security and how the aftermath of a theft was handled.

Here is an excerpt from a member who experienced a recent vehicle break-in on a Monday morning in early September.

Synopsis: I work remotely, but I sometimes have to go into the office to pick up mail or send packages, oftentimes stopping along the way. On a Monday, while in my vehicle and on my way back home after the last errand, I noticed that the dog bed in the rear was at an angle and almost on the floor. I didn't think much about it because I thought it had simply shifted while driving. It was a sunny day, so I reached for my sunglasses. They were not in the usual place, so I looked in the passenger seat. Not there either. I noticed a box of tissue was on the floor of the passenger's seat, which I thought that was odd, and I then reached for a different pair of sunglasses from my glove compartment. That's when I realized that someone had broken into my vehicle because sunglasses were missing from the glove box. The clues were there, but I initially shrugged them off.

### **Key Takeaways as this Member Reflects:**

What choice words did you say? Well, believe it or not, I said, "Jesus, someone got into my vehicle. Help me Jesus!"

Were you angry? Not really. At first, I was perplexed that someone actually got into my new SUV, which I have owned for not even a year. I thought, "just move on," because I don't want anger to grow in my spirit, but then suddenly something opens the door to that anger, which abruptly appears because of the theft event. So, I decided not to wait for the anger to appear, and I gave myself 24 hours to get over it and determine ways to be more vigilant.

Did you lock the vehicle? This was my first question because there was no evidence of a break-in, but I quickly answered the question because the vehicle auto locks if the key is not present for 30 seconds. Perhaps there was a malfunction in the security system or they had a device to trigger the lock. Either way, I tried it myself with the key left in my house, and it didn't allow me to get into the vehicle after 30 seconds. I'm not too concerned about it because I have planned for the next vehicle and will include more secure linkages to online APPS for tracking and alerts to help.

What did they take? About \$2000 in sunglasses—as an avid cyclist and traveler, I only buy certain types of sunglasses to get full eye protection. Only about \$20 cash that I use for carwash tips.

<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*

## Security Ministry

*Are you Secure? (Continued)*

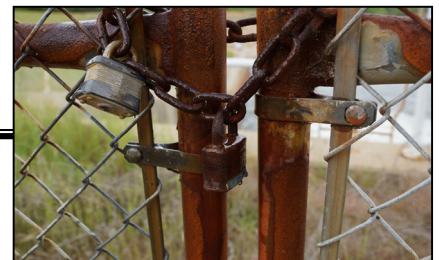
Did you call the police? No. I was glad they didn't break the window to get into the vehicle, and I had to weigh the time to report the theft versus the loss and the chance of recovery. In the end, I thought, "oh well, I hope they wear them well," and decided to let God address it. I forgave whoever broke into the vehicle that day and moved on.

What could you have done differently? Put four pairs of sunglasses into the lower compartment that locks with a separate key. The fault on my part is that I didn't stay VIGILANT and didn't think about sunglasses being stolen. Who knew? At least they knew what they were getting once they found them and took all of them!

How do you feel about the loss? Mixed feelings because I had to buy them again, but I always have a backup plan as, when I do buy glasses, I get at least two pairs, so I had a pair at the house. All material anyway and I know where to go to buy what I need without thinking about it. I ordered replacements and received them in two days, so I was back to where I started without missing a beat.

What message do you have for anyone who may have experienced theft? Move on, decide on how to report the incident and let God handle it. Stay vigilant and understand what crooks and thieves look for in vehicles. I was told that the dog bed and blanket in my vehicle will often be viewed as a cover for something that may be underneath. So, if you leave something in your vehicle, expect it to be gone; otherwise, just don't leave it in the vehicle. This includes paperwork that may have your address or important information that can be used to steal your identity.

**Lock. Leave. Return.**



It is not about the value of what was taken, but how you handle the aftermath. So, a change in mindset is needed that is not about material possessions being stolen, but about how to react when something occurs and your next steps as you strive to stay aligned with God.

**Matthew 24:43** <sup>43</sup>But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Security Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Confidential.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **College and Young Professionals Ministry**

### *Ways to Assist Students after K-12 Experiences*

In today's society, there are several pathways to help students understand and master their coursework, but what about mastering college life, whether that entails living away from home or just commuting while living at home? Class attendance isn't linked to any public policy, and parents won't be called if you miss a class when an obstacle derails your efforts.

As Christians, every day that you live without obstacles should allow you to understand that God is telling you to breathe and continue on your journey. Why should confrontation, issues beyond your control or blockers (obstacles) be any different? Sometimes problems crop up for a reason, and we need to learn how to meet them head-on, search for solutions, and continue on. As you strive and make progress toward your goals and need to make decisions, you should not use permanent thinking for temporary issues that you may not understand.

College can be an exceptional experience for students. It's a journey that gives a plethora of new experiences along the way. It's important to know that a member of the college and young professionals ministry is always a step away to assist with this journey (by phone call, text, email).



<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*

## **College and Young Professionals Ministry**

*Ways to Assist Students after K-12 Experiences (Continued)*

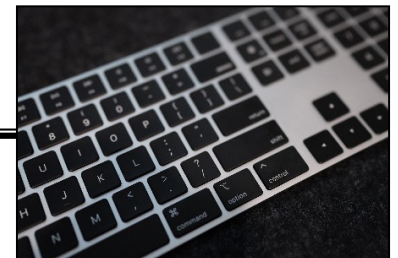
### **What do you do when life appears to be going in a direction that you cannot control?**

The easy answer to this question is to turn to God and pray. However, when the experience you've had is traumatic or distracting, you may sometimes carry things that you should not carry or worry about. The college and young professionals ministry supports students who may be away from home for the first time or taking the next steps after their K-12 education but who still must get up and get after it. In this endeavor, the ministry focuses on maintaining the good teaching principles received at home as well as from mentors and church experiences. The aim is to continue reinforcing the teachings they learned previously as the world tries to influence them.

*A member of the ministry was asked the key question: How does ministry efforts help students after they leave high school?*

- We strive to keep lines of communication open with students. This effort includes a series of words of the day, an initiative that started in 2010. This initiative lets students know that someone is thinking about them. A member of the ministry can then follow-up with a phone call or text message.
- When students are in need, we are there to help them resolve their issues. We understand how critical it is for God's people to be in their lives, and we aim to be a lifeline. Whenever students call, at any time, day or night, we are there. They will remember our conversation and know they have someone to listen to them.
- We encourage conversations to help students continue their journey; all conversations take place in a righteous context. We assist students in every way we can. Doing so can be especially challenging in the times we live in, when society tries to make wrong right. We strive to keep right right.
- The ministry offers a workshop each year on how to be a good friend (just a good friend) and a workshop (referred to as the transitions workshop) to help them make the transition from college or high school to the workplace that encompasses life skills. This workshop includes topics that range from how to interview for a job to applying biblical principles to their finances and social skills (not just texting but being around each other), all the while emphasizing the human experience since we all must continue to grow, gain experience, and need each other as people.

**Just Type and Send!**



<http://www.fwcoc.org>

*"Changing the World for the better Everyday"*



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief

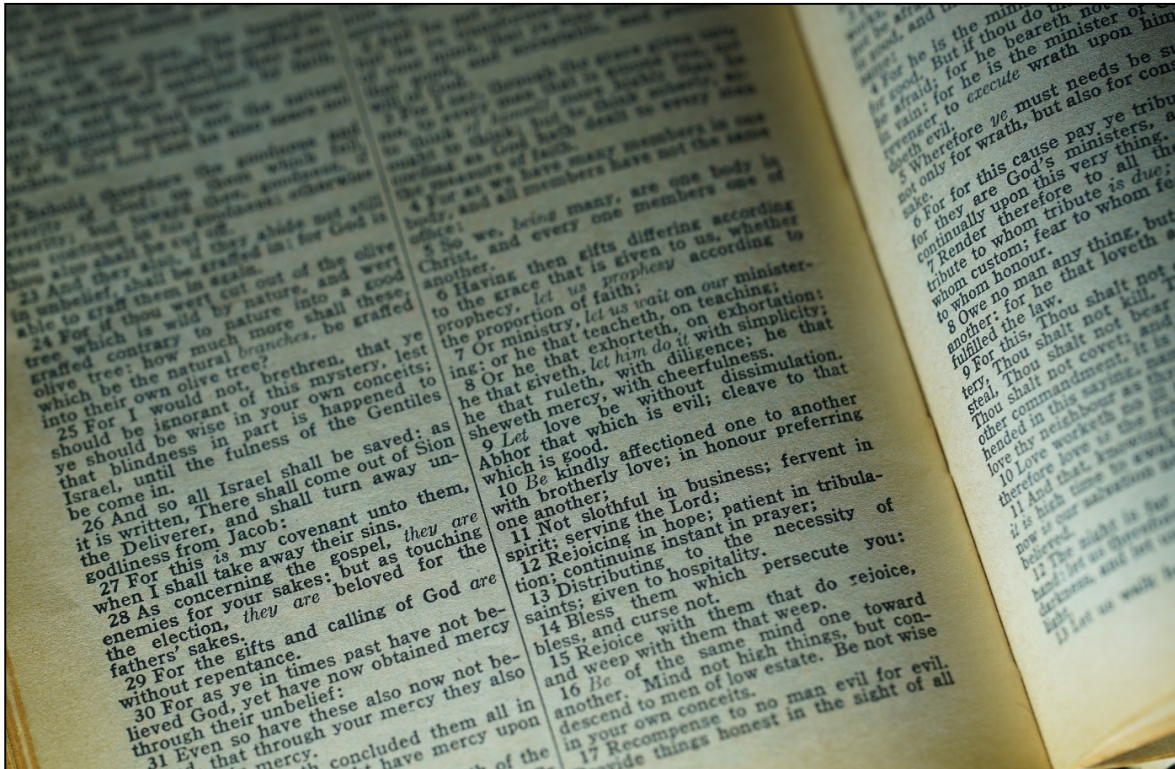


### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## College and Young Professionals Ministry

### *Ways to Assist Students after K-12 Experiences (Continued)*

The ministry strives to give students teachings that pertain to life and righteousness. The ministry can be viewed as investing in students when the “training wheels” have been kicked off, before they make decisions that may derail their journey and carry them away from God; this derailment may occur in the period between high school and one’s late thirties, according to researchers. Therefore, the ministry diligently focuses on being present and keeping students involved in the church.



**Romans 12: 10-13** “<sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor, <sup>11</sup> not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup> rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, <sup>13</sup> contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** College and Young Professionals Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Stephen Henley, Otis Phillips, Gary Grandison, Angel Grandison, James Dean Colbert, Cynthia Colbert, Cedric Lee.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part I*

You have heard the phrase “you are what you eat,” but what about “you are how and what you exercise”? Certainly, eating correctly is key, but a lack of consistent exercise decreases the impact of eating properly, particularly as we age and body systems change, causing them to get out of equilibrium and leading to chronic health conditions. Yes, genetics, environmental factors, and behaviors all play roles in different conditions, but that is even more reason to do all that we can to keep our systems in equilibrium anyway. The human body is composed of systems that work in concert, and if a system gets out of equilibrium, then one can start to experience impacts across the human body, which can be seen both in medical tests and in noticeable day-to-day changes.

Each year, the health and wellness ministry plans a 5K walk to help stimulate activity and provide members with a jumpstart in finding their next steps. The benefits range from exposing members to basic stretching exercises to completing the walk itself as briskly as your level of fitness allows. After all, it is good to work out with others as a way to gain motivation.



<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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part I (Continued)*

### **FWCOC 5K Walk Experiences**

In 2022, the 5K walk was moved from January to April to try to take advantage of the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions. The health and wellness ministry team focused on getting back to fitness. The goal was to encourage people who may not have moved regularly for several months to try to get back into regular exercise, helping to jumpstart their return to the habit of exercising.

The ministry has also planned fitness Saturdays as another way to get back into fitness, and the class is open to all. Class activities focus on strength training, cardio, balance, and flexibility, and even if you have never deliberately exercised before, anybody can start: everyone can find something from among these four types of exercises that they can do to start moving.

### **The Importance of Physical Activity as outlined in the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans by ODPHP**

According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), physical activity is key to improving the health of the nation. The Physical Activity Guidelines is an essential resource for health professionals and policy makers. It includes recommendations for Americans ages 3 years and over — including people at increased risk of chronic disease — and provides evidence-based advice on how physical activity can help promote health and reduce the risk of chronic disease.



<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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part I (Continued)*

ODPHP has produced guidelines based on the latest science. A summary of these guidelines for adults and older adults are outlined below.

### *Key Guidelines for Safe Physical Activity (Applies to All Groups)*

To do physical activity safely and reduce risk of injuries and other adverse events, people should:

- Understand the risks, yet be confident that physical activity can be safe for almost everyone.
- Choose types of physical activity that are appropriate for current fitness level and health goals, because some activities are safer than others.
- Increase physical activity gradually over time to meet key guidelines or health goals. Inactive people should “start low and go slow” by starting with lower intensity activities and gradually increasing how often and how long activities are done.
- Protect yourself by using appropriate gear and sports equipment, choosing safe environments, following rules and policies, and making sensible choices about when, where, and how to be active.
- Consult and obtain approval from a health care professional or physical activity specialist for any chronic conditions or other health symptoms. The professional should verify the types and amounts of activity that are appropriate.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part I (Continued)*

### *Key Guidelines for Adults (Prerequisite - Adherence to Safety Guidelines)*

- Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none. Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits.
- For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes to 300 minutes a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes to 150 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate-and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.
- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.

In addition, the following key guidelines are just for older adults:

- As part of their weekly physical activity, older adults should do multicomponent physical activity that includes balance training as well as aerobic and muscle strengthening activities.
- Older adults should determine their level of effort for physical activity relative to their level of fitness.
- Older adults with chronic conditions should understand whether and how their conditions affect their ability to do regular physical activity safely.
- When older adults cannot do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week because of chronic conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.

Learn more at the ODPHP website. (Source: health.gov)

“I enjoyed the walk and this is great information, but how can I get involved in a focused fitness program?” Simply join the Saturday sessions and extend your involvement with some of the neighborhood programs that ministry leaders are involved in. In Part II, we will review options for extending your fitness regimen by attending regular sessions and help guide and shape your fitness routines. *(Continued in Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part II - Extensions)*

**Ephesians 5: 1-2** “<sup>1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup>and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.” *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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



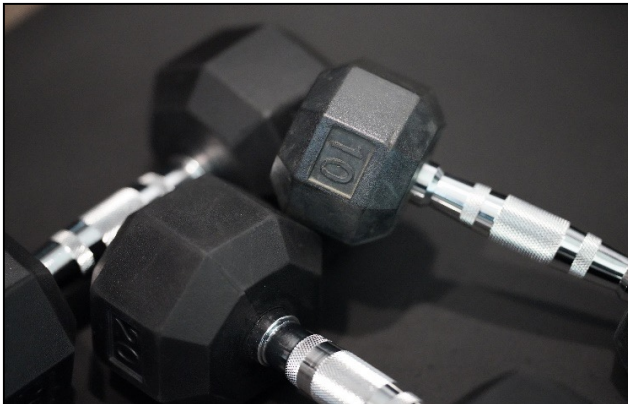
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part II - Extensions*

Have you ever thought about your daily choices as if they were a menu of items to select from based on your appetite? Yes, we live in a society that has all kinds of menu options, but we need to be able to change our diet and not just accept what is on the menu during our quest for better health and wellness. You cannot change or delete the menu options you are exposed to daily, but you can change your appetite and pass by those items that don't match it.

This is a great analogy, but what does this have to do with my journey? Your overall health and wellness depends on your mindset, regardless of the societal circumstances that are impacting your appetite; if you don't have an appetite to exercise, you need to figure out how to change your appetite so you become interested only in the choicest menu items.



### Ways to Get Moving

Exercise is key to overall health and wellness as we age. One of the many ways people can improve their overall health and well-being is to establish a regular routine, which can range from walking a trail to formal community-based or professional wellness programs. The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) issued recommendations for park, trail, and greenway infrastructure interventions to be used in combination with additional changes to improve the built and natural environments by creating or enhancing some of the following public locations for physical activity, relaxation, social interaction, and enjoyment:

- *Parks*—designated public areas that often combine greenery with paths, facilities for physical activity and recreation, and places for relaxation and social interaction.
- *Trails and Greenways*—routes for walking, hiking, or cycling in urban, suburban, or rural areas (e.g., “rails to trails” conversion projects). These may involve street conversions that provide opportunities for walking and cycling (most often in urban areas).

Additional interventions include community engagement; public awareness activities; programs that offer structured opportunities for physical activity and social interaction; access enhancements, such as transportation connections, street crossings, and expanded hours of operation; or a combination of these components. (Source: health.gov)

<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part II – Extensions (Continued)*



#### What's available in the Houston area?

One class that uses community-based efforts is the senior fitness class led by Leroy Mobley, who hosts several classes during the month at various locations, including Tom Bass Community Center (part of the Harris County Precinct One program efforts). These classes started with 40 people, but today typically attract more than 100 participants, with many lining up outside before the class begins.

The classes focus on teaching four different exercises: cardio, strength training, flexibility and balance. The older you get, the more you lose your balance, feel weak, become short of breath, and lose muscle mass, so he teaches how to get these back. The classes also encourage participants to exercise offsite and away from class, and some of the exercises carried participants through the pandemic. Leroy makes people laugh and tells participants to leave their stresses at the door. During the class participants motivate each other.

Participant responses:

*"Different pains going on, but these consistent exercises have made my body much stronger since I have been coming to the classes."*

*"I love this place and classes because it gives me, as well as others, a chance to come here and get out of the house."*

*"There are different age groups in the class from 50 to 90, and it motivates everyone as participants engage with the instructor."*

*"People are wonderful and enjoyable, and it helps me, and I love it."*

*"Just makes you feel good. Seeing everyone together makes you more motivated."*

<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*Reflections on the 5K Walk to Jump Start Your Fitness Program, Part II – Extensions (Continued)*

So, what's your excuse? Find a way to change your appetite and put exercise on the menu. If you want to start an exercise regimen, feel free to contact the health and wellness ministry to help you with ideas on ways to get started. You can even include God in your exercise regimen by using digital devices to listen to your favorite spiritual songs or to revisit a sermon while exercising.



**Hebrews 10: 23-25** “<sup>23</sup> Let’s hold firmly to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup> and let’s consider how to encourage one another in love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not abandoning our own meeting together, as is the habit of some people, but encouraging *one another*, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **In-Brief Ministry**

### *The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Introduction*

As humans, we all have the ability to think and make decisions, but do we think critically and make connections? How about using visualization as a way to apply such thinking and to make us cognizant of our own thought processes?

Imagine that you are looking at a set of pictures on your digital device. As you move from one picture to another, details and connections change; as you consider how and why the pictures were obtained—noting the objects and colors comprising the scenes—you are building a framework for making connections to other ideas or concepts. You can continue to study these scenes, ponder more deeply, make inferences, and then apply your conclusions to your life. This process is sometimes called critical thinking.

*"All this makes sense, but how does it apply to anything that I am involved in?"* Application is everything; critical thinking is important in all facets of life, especially for those who are aligned with God's plan. Having visual artifacts simply allows us to expand the practical application of scripture.



### **The Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes**

Why use authentic scenes for the practical application of scripture? Real world visual scenes (captured in pictures or video clips) that are authentic and unedited present complex information in a straightforward way, stimulate the senses, enhance understanding, and allow us to see things in our mind's eye, which is a key part of our learned reality and our imagined thoughts.

Merriam-Webster defines application as *"the practical conclusion or lesson to be derived from a speech or writing; and as capacity for practical use."* This approach is therefore another way to provide experiences for others based on their context of understanding, which ultimately broadens the practicality of scripture.

**<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*

### In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Introduction (Continued)*

Join the excitement as the In-Brief Ministry introduces another toolset for your spiritual wellness kit: *The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes*.

<b>Making Connections</b> How would you apply words, phrases or messages in the <i>scripture</i> referenced below to this scene? Justify your responses.	
<b>Ephesians 1:1-3</b>	<b>Acts 2:38</b>
<b>Romans 5:1-3</b>	<b>Revelation 1:17-18</b>
	

One connection between the lake scene and Acts 2:38 is the word **baptized**: As Christians, we believe that, in order to be saved, we must hear, believe, repent, confess, and be **baptized** by being submerged completely in a body of water. Perhaps the water in the lake scene could be used as a place to **baptize** individuals. However, if you were thinking critically, you would probably want to take the temperature of the water, review any warning signs for lawful entry, and check for evidence of organisms before deciding whether it is safe for humans. If it is not safe, you might explore the surrounding area until you find the right spot. This makes you think about how **baptisms** were done in earlier times when today's conveniences were not readily available.

Of course, designated members of the body would need to be present and work together with the individual to review what it means to be a Christian, answer any questions, take a final statement to confirm overall understanding and beliefs, and perform the actual **baptism**. Once **baptized**, members will offer assistance for continued growth as a Christian. Ultimately, to be **baptized**, you need a water source that will allow a person's entire body to be submerged in the water and then brought back to the surface.

<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*

### **In-Brief Ministry**

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Introduction (Continued)*

The *Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes* toolset is a way to help anyone expand their mindset, understand true connections, and relate to the scriptures based on their level of knowledge. Using it offers another path for the continued study of the scriptures. *(Continued in Part II, The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Developing)*



**Acts 2:38** “<sup>38</sup>Peter *said* to them, Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** In-Brief

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

### **In-Brief Ministry**

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Developing*

Are your experiences planned? Or do you simply create them as you go along on your journey? Do you let an experience that may have broken you at age 20 continue to break or derail you year after year? Individuals who have “grown” with time understand that all experiences should be continually assessed and reviewed, regardless of the outcome. Assessing an experience should entail critical and rational thinking to gain a greater understanding of it.

Great points, but what’s the linkage to my life? Growth, awareness, and understanding. As you live, experiences are created as a result of your conversations and actions. Some people say you should pause before you talk or act. But how do you know how long that pause should be? Others say you should stay “prayed up” and let God handle the experience. If you trust God and understand scripture in a practical way, things will always work out, regardless of the circumstances.

In this issue, we focus on glacial areas for the *Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes*.



<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*

### In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Developing (Continued)*

#### The Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes

What is the best way to create positive experiences? One way is to ponder God's natural creations, such as glacial areas. Have you ever seen a glacier up close? They are fascinating to experience. With their majestic icebergs and pools of water, glaciers have the power to create an experience that leaves a firm impression of nature's cycles.

#### Making Connections

How would you apply words, phrases or messages in the *scripture* referenced below to this set of scenes? Justify your responses.

**Genesis 1:9-10**

**Mark 13:18-20**

**1 Peter 1:17-19**

**Psalms 148:1-3**



<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*

## In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Developing (Continued)*

The following are two possible connections:

Genesis 1:9–10 (NASB). The phrase **gathering of the waters He called seas**. In Genesis, we read about the **gathering of the waters He called seas**. As Christians, we believe that in the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth. The Earth was formless and a desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface. Then God started forming and shaping the Earth; the **gathering of the waters He called seas** relates to the vast expanse of the oceans (also called seas) around the globe that support various ecosystems.

Mendenhall glacier as depicted in this set, is melting into the surrounding areas to ponds, lakes, rivers and oceans. Glaciers are key identifiers of major ecosystems around the globe and can deeply impact certain areas due to changes in climate. Critically, glaciers did not just magically appear around the world, but were a major part of God's creation of the Earth.

1 Peter 1:17–19 (NASB). The phrase **stay on Earth**. Glaciers can be described as rivers of ice, and we all know that ice will melt, form pools of water, and eventually evaporate as part of the water cycle. As Christians, we understand that our **stay on Earth** is temporary and will both affect and be affected by various forms of turmoil, but we realize that we are not redeemed through material (including digital) objects during our **stay on Earth**, but only through the blood of Christ.



<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*

### **In-Brief Ministry**

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Developing (Continued)*

The *Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes* toolset is a way to help anyone expand their mindset, understand true connections, and relate to the scriptures based on their level of knowledge. Using it offers another path for the continued study of the scriptures. *(Continued in Part III, The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes: Practicing)*



**1 Peter 1: 17-19** “<sup>17</sup> If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; <sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup> but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood of Christ*.” *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** In-Brief

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

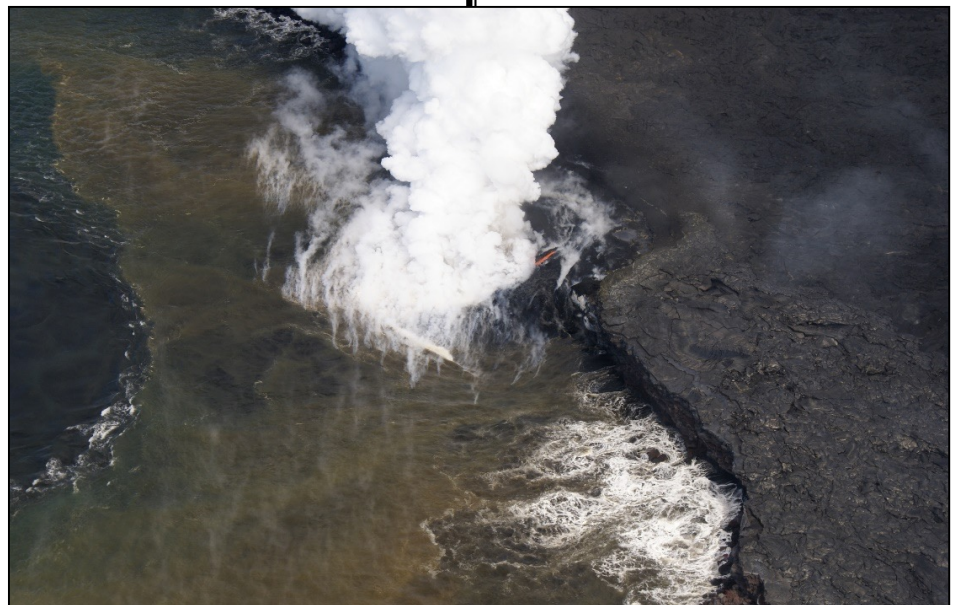
### **In-Brief Ministry**

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes - Practicing*

Has someone ever told you not to let your mouth write a check (paper or electronic) that you can't cash? Such warnings remind us that what we say is immediate and doesn't take time to "clear," giving no timeframe to cancel or reflect on what we have said but leaving only the option of correcting damage or trying to salvage what we can.

"All of this is fascinating, but what do transaction clearing times have to do with me trying to stay aligned with scripture?" Short answer: be cognizant of what experiences you create using words. Like that check (or digital transaction) that you sent without reviewing the amount or checking the recipient, words matter and you shouldn't say (or do) things that you cannot "cover." Instead, you should focus on how your words matter to others and always strive to apply scripture in a practical way across experiences.

In this issue, we focus on the volcanic areas of Hawaii's Big Island for the *Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes*.



<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*

### In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes - Practicing (Continued)*

#### The Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes

Have you ever seen or experienced volcanic activity on an island? A special part of God's creation, islands are landforms surrounded by water, and they can truly be remote—especially islands that have active volcanoes or evidence of past volcanic activity. Islands can be amazing in helping us understand how mankind has utilized God's creation to extend habitats and communities.

#### Making Connections

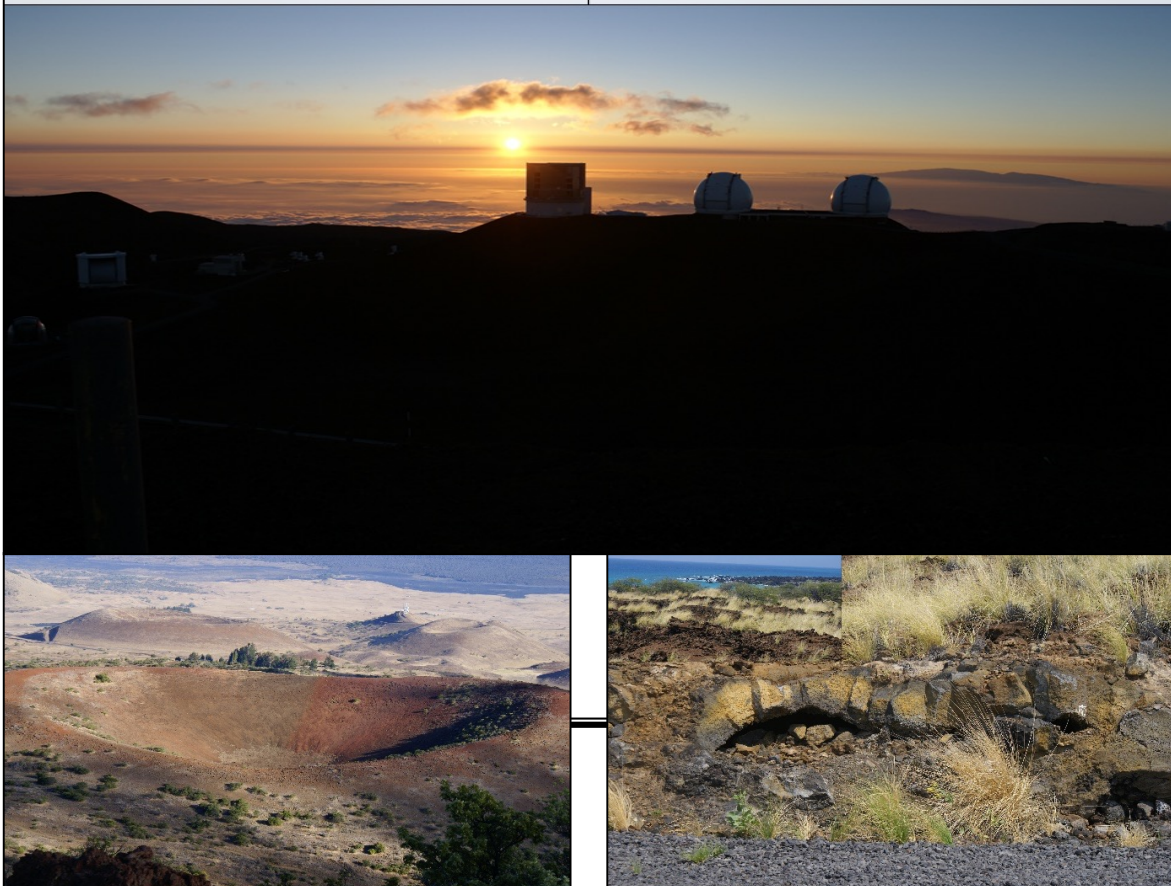
How would you apply words, phrases or messages in the *scripture* referenced below to this set of scenes? Justify your responses.

**Mark 6:45-50**

**Jonah 4:8**

**1 Peter 5:1-4**

**Ecclesiastes 1:3-5**



<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*

## In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes - Practicing (Continued)*

The following are two possible connections:

**Mark 6:45-50 (NASB):** The phrase **went up on a mountainside to pray**. In Mark 6:45, we read about when He **went up on a mountainside to pray**. Mountains are key landforms across the world and provide solace to those who may want to reach higher levels of thought. One scene in the scene set shows a sunset on a mountain known as Mauna Kea Volcano (Mount Mauna Kea). Mount Mauna Kea rises 4,205 meters above sea level but extends about 6,000 meters below sea level to meet the deep ocean floor. Its total height is nearly 10,211 meters, considerably higher than the height of the tallest mountain on land, Mount Everest in the Himalayas, which is 8,848 meters above sea level. (Source: USGS.gov)

At this altitude, it can be easy to pray and continue to marvel at God's creation, reaching higher levels of clarity. Experiencing places such as these provide an understanding of why Jesus **went up on a mountainside to pray**. Mount Mauna Kea provides a way to experience something amazing, and adding prayer makes it phenomenal.

**Ecclesiastes 1:3-5 (NASB):** The phrases the **sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises** and **generations come and generations go**. In Ecclesiastes 1:5, we are told that the **sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises**. Sunsets are always amazing, especially if you are at an altitude where you can watch the sun set in your time zone and appreciate that even then it is beginning to rise in another, providing you with another way to see that we are part of a larger plan. Being able to experience sunset at a Mount Mauna Kea provides a deeper appreciation of how **the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises**, showing how God's creation is perfect.

We also understand, from Ecclesiastes 1:4, that **generations come and generations go**, which is a key phrase that instructs Christians that we are not on Earth to stay. We are just passing through. Even though we do not know the exact time and date when our physical journey will end, we believe, understand, and have faith that we are on a journey and that, while **generations come and generations go**, some physical things remain on Earth and can span those generations. The craters around Mount Mauna Kea provide evidence of volcanic activity and are good examples of how the Earth has been impacted over time, which can be experienced by the next generation.



<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*

### In-Brief Ministry

*The Practical Application of Scripture using Authentic Visual Scenes - Practicing (Continued)*

The *Practical Application of Scripture Using Authentic Visual Scenes* toolset is a way to help anyone expand their mindset, understand true connections, and relate to the scriptures based on their level of knowledge. Using it offers another path for the continued study of the scriptures.



**Mark 6: 45-50** <sup>45</sup>And immediately Jesus had His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He Himself dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup>And after saying goodbye to them, He left for the mountain to pray. <sup>47</sup>When it was evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land. <sup>48</sup>Seeing them straining at the oars—for the wind was against them—at about the fourth watch of the night, He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them. <sup>49</sup>But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they thought that it was a ghost, and they cried out; <sup>50</sup>for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, “Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** In-Brief

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part I – Choosing Attitudes and Behaviors Using Science*

COVID-19 began to impact lives in early 2020 as the world saw the warning signs and realized the sudden impact of a public health crisis in a rational society. Most have stayed steadfast in appreciating the underlying problems of the pathogen and the associated impacts, but others who don't fully understand the science have had issues with truly understanding this virus and how it seeks to "latch on" to a host in order to replicate.

We have heard stories about people in the hospital begging for the vaccine or for some other source of help, feeling helpless, realizing that they cannot get enough oxygen, and saying that they should have just been vaccinated, or still refusing to acknowledge that they have COVID-19. Some people, when we consider these situations, simply think, "I hope it doesn't happen again," but living in a society prone to new COVID-19 variants, we all need to shift our thinking and focus on doing the right thing and on learning from experiences.

Is this the same behavior that people would display once Jesus returns – "I should have gotten baptized, remained faithful, and stayed in the church"? The best response to such people would be "trust and understand what God would have you do" and be aware and take the appropriate precautions.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part I – Choosing Attitudes and Behaviors Using Science (Continued)*

### What precautions should I take for COVID-19?

Precautions are not just about saving you, but about controlling the spread of the virus so others will not be infected and so the impact of the virus will not circle back around to you in the form of closures, rules, strict regulations, and dangerous variants, to name only a few of the hazards. The most pernicious problem with COVID-19 is that although it impacts the respiratory system most, it may also impact internal organs, leading to long-term problems.

Oftentimes, test results and imaging devices are needed to show the full impact of COVID-19. If its effects were comparable to other viruses (polio, Ebola, etc.), which are external and much more visible, it is likely that there would be much more awareness of the dangers. If you read about polio, it will quickly become clear how horrific it could be even for those who survived, but what can you do to change the mindset of a grown person? You hear some people say, “I got through COVID-19, and it wasn’t that bad,” but they believe that, just because they have survived. Researchers are beginning studies of the long-term impacts of COVID-19 infections to get ahead of the new problems that are already appearing, like fatigue, memory loss, nausea, and joint pain – and these are the struggles that may lie ahead for those who beat the disease.

Some are saying that COVID-19 is becoming a question of the vaccinated versus the unvaccinated, but as variants continue to run wild, everyone should consider how to better protect themselves. The key is to think about what can occur if you are vaccinated versus what can happen if you are not, as researchers continue to strive to understand the efficacy of the FDA-approved vaccines. In preparation for the fall season and as variants continue to “run around, seeking a host,” consider reviewing the following information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 infections:

#### Understand the Vaccines and Determine if you will “Get Vaccinated”

- Authorized COVID-19 vaccines can help protect you from COVID-19.
- As of September 16, 2021, the CDC recommends groups that **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech’s COVID-19 Vaccine at least 6 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.

#### Wear a mask

- If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
- In areas with high numbers of COVID-19 cases, consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you are fully vaccinated, to maximize protection from variants and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part I – Choosing Attitudes and Behaviors Using Science (Continued)*

### Stay at least 6 feet away from others

- Inside your home: Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household. Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick

### Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces

- Being in crowds puts you at higher risk for COVID-19.
- Avoid indoor spaces that do not offer fresh air from the outdoors as much as possible.
- If indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible.

### Wash your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

### Cover coughs and sneezes

- If you are wearing a mask: You can cough or sneeze into your mask. Put on a new, clean mask as soon as possible and wash your hands
- If you are not wearing a mask: (1) Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit; (2) Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands.

### Clean and disinfect

- Clean high touch surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If someone is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19, disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Use a household disinfectant product from EPA's List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus (COVID-19) according to manufacturer's labeled directions.

### Monitor your health daily

- Be alert for symptoms.
- Take your temperature if symptoms develop.
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part I – Choosing Attitudes and Behaviors Using Science (Continued)*

Yes checklists are great, but following them are even better. After all, do we wait until Jesus returns before we go over our checklist and get the “vaccine” of being baptized and ordering our steps by remaining faithful to God during our journey? Or are we proactive, remaining faithful, trusting God, and following the path of righteousness? Of course, the choice is ours, but having the Bible be our main source of truth must be a key part of all decisions. *(Continued in COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part II – What can I do as a vaccinated person?)*



**Proverbs 14:16** <sup>16</sup>"A wise person is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part II - What can I do as a vaccinated person?*

Why is there so much discussion around the COVID-19 vaccines? Is it because people are less educated about the concepts and processes of science and don't fully understand how their "loaned" physical body works and how it's a part of a much larger global system? Or is it more of a follow-the-leader problem, whereby people hear something on TV or radio or read it on a website or in a newspaper and just do what they're told? The concept of a vaccine is not new; they have existed for years, and we should all do what we can to avoid misinformation and to remember history, understand history, and avoid re-writing history.

These may be valid points, but what does this have to do with me being a fully vaccinated person or with these "variants"? The quick answer is avoiding misinformation, which is rampant in today's society. Christians have a responsibility to stay aligned with scripture and to avoid misinformation campaigns, and understanding what it means to be fully vaccinated is another topic for which we all need valid sources of truth.

### **What can fully vaccinated people do as the variants remain at large?**

We live in a society in which people can travel across continents in less than a day, and exposure to pathogens should be on everyone's radar because they can "hitch a ride" and accompany you to your destination. There are many other virulent viruses that can impact society around the globe, so how are they controlled? Typically, it is by processes, practices, and vaccines to control infections, but researchers also work to stay ahead of and eradicate them, using information gathered over time to do so. COVID-19 spreads as a respiratory virus, and researchers have been steadfast in attacking it from all angles and staying vigilant to stop its spread including the use of highly effective vaccines.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part II - What can I do as a vaccinated person? (Continued)*

An important distinction to understand is *vaccinated* versus *fully vaccinated*. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine. If you haven't met these requirements, regardless of your age, you are **NOT** fully vaccinated. Boosters are also now being offered, which can be added to maximize vaccine effectiveness. Vaccine makers are updating their guidance and recommendations for boosters for various age groups and working closely with the FDA to broaden various authorizations as the data are reviewed across research areas.

As of October 31, 2021, the CDC stated that, in the United States, more than 420M vaccine doses have been administered and 192.2M people are fully vaccinated. An additional 17.7M people have received a vaccine booster. The CDC has outlined several recommendations to help the general public make decisions about daily activities after becoming fully vaccinated:

- You can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.
- You should wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission in order to reduce the risk of being infected with the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others.
- You may want to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.
- If you travel within the United States, you do not need to get tested before or after travel nor do you need to self-quarantine after travel.
- If you travel outside the United States, you must pay close attention to the situation at your international destination.
- Even once vaccinated, you should still watch out for symptoms of COVID-19. If you've had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should get tested 3–5 days after your exposure, even if you don't have symptoms. You should also wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative. You should isolate for 10 days if your test result is positive.
- You will still need to follow the guidance given at your workplace, local businesses, and institutions.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken the immune system should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.

<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

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part II - What can I do as a vaccinated person? (Continued)*

Being fully vaccinated is not permission to forget about COVID-19 and stop being concerned about the pandemic; it is about protecting yourself and others. So enjoy walking the dog, running, cycling, playing golf or whatever outdoor activity you like to do and understand and abide by recommended CDC guidelines.

Researchers at the CDC have also outlined key points known about the vaccines:

- COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing COVID-19, including severe illness and death.
- COVID-19 vaccines are effective against severe disease and death caused by all variants of the virus that are currently circulating in the United States, including the Delta variant.
- Infections happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. When these infections occur among vaccinated people, the symptoms tend to be mild.
- If you are fully vaccinated and become infected with the Delta variant, you can spread the virus to others.
- People with weakened immune systems, including people who take immunosuppressive medications, may not be protected even if fully vaccinated



## Outdoor Activities

Christians should care about a person's overall spiritual and physical well-being as best we can and should seek and provide sources of truth about all topics, including vaccines. The focus should be on your immune response in order to protect yourself and others, especially those who cannot protect themselves due to a compromised immune system or other conditions or who may not be able to get the vaccine, including those who are too young.

Ultimately, we should stay "chimed in" with scripture and aligned with God. *(Continued in COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part III—Planning the Holiday Season)*

**Matthew 9:11-12** <sup>11</sup>"And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>12</sup>But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick."" *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part III - Planning the Holiday Season*

What are your plans during the “calendar-focused” holiday season—events, get togethers, or enjoying your own company? As we move into this holiday period, there continues to be controversy and division surrounding COVID-19 and the associated variants across the globe, including division within family units, especially over how different events should be planned and what choices should be made. When there are more choices, there is often more anxiety about selecting the right one—worry about the choices that one needs to make and the best choices for oneself, one’s family, and the community, which can often lead to division. Yet, do we really need to choose between all possible options, or should we be guided by the research and data (from respected and truthful sources) to which options are worth considering?

Think about what occurred in Numbers 21:6-9.

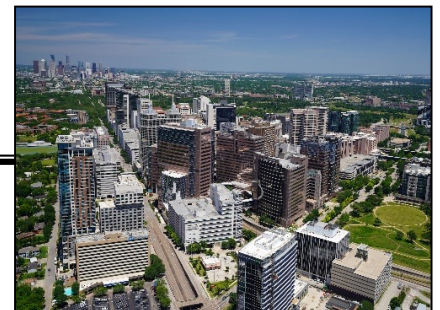
*“Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup>So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and against you; intercede with the Lord, that He will remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people. <sup>8</sup>Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and put it on a flag pole; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, and looks at it, will live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a bronze serpent and put it on the flag pole; and it came about, that if a serpent bit someone, and he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

These verses describe what the people should have done, based on a choice from well-respected advisors. All the people had to do was look at the serpent; those that looked up survived, and those who didn’t died.

It’s great scripture, but what does it have to do with us and these variants? The answer is doubt, obedience, and uncertainty. A key take-away is that we should trust the science and the well-respected, educated, and truthful minds in healthcare who have placed your overall well-being at the forefront of their thinking. Have you ever wondered about the “snake emblem” in medicine? It is common on many medical items, and some researchers consider it to be symbolic of how destructive creatures can be used for a healing purpose. The origin of the emblem with the snake on a pole has been debated around the world, but Numbers 21:6-9 in the trusted Bible cannot be ignored and is often referenced by historians and researchers as a source of truth and wisdom.

Thus, the entire question is one of obedience based on understanding from trusted sources of truth. Advice from trusted healthcare professionals and scientific researchers who have your overall well-being in mind should be heeded seriously, especially as we move into the holiday season, with COVID-19 variants continuing to wreak havoc.

**Stay Vigilant**



<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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part III - Planning the Holiday Season (Continued)*

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Recommended Guidelines for Safer Ways to Celebrate the Holidays**

According to the CDC, there remains ongoing concern regarding COVID-19 variants. Some have come and gone during the pandemic, but researchers are now extremely concerned about a new, heavily mutated variant that was officially announced on November 26, 2021, by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is called Omicron (B.1.1.529): SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern. The Omicron variant was first reported in South Africa on November 24, based on a specimen collected in early November. With this new variant, several countries, including the United States, have implemented new international travel restrictions.

Researchers are also continuing to stress the importance of getting the vaccine—and, if eligible, getting a booster shot. Researchers are also reviewing data, examining test results, and analyzing this new variant of concern in order to get ahead of any possible impacts that it might have on current vaccination protocols. So, be aware of the new variant and be extra vigilant during the holiday season as researchers start to understand how virulent it is and its associated effects.

According to the CDC, there are several ways to enjoy holiday traditions and protect your health as many generations gather together. The best way to minimize COVID-19 risks and keep your family and friends safe is to get vaccinated, if you're eligible.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part III - Planning the Holiday Season (Continued)*

Here are safer ways to celebrate the holidays, as recommended by the CDC:

### ***Generally***

- Protect those not yet eligible for vaccination such as young children by getting yourself and other eligible people around them vaccinated.
- Wear well-fitting masks over your nose and mouth if you are in public indoor settings if you are not fully vaccinated.
  - Even those who are fully vaccinated should wear a mask in public indoor settings in communities with substantial to high transmission. Outdoors is safer than indoors.
  - Avoid crowded, poorly ventilated spaces.
  - If you are sick or have symptoms, don't host or attend a gathering.
  - Get tested if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have a close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- If celebrating indoors, bring fresh air inside by opening windows and doors. You can also put a window fan in one of the open windows to blow air out of the window, helping pull fresh air in through the other open windows.
- If you are considering traveling for a holiday or event, visit CDC's Travel page to help you decide what is best for you and your family. CDC still recommends delaying travel until you are fully vaccinated.

### ***Special Considerations***

- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated and have received a booster. They should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- You might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.

If you are gathering with a group of people from multiple households and potentially from different parts of the country, you could consider additional precautions (e.g., avoiding crowded indoor spaces before travel, taking a test) in advance of gathering to further reduce risk.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part III - Planning the Holiday Season (Continued)*

How do you position yourself spiritually? Consider that your body is a temple and that you should govern it and care for it accordingly. The vaccine will not put a shield over you, but it will greatly reduce your chances of being hospitalized or placed on a ventilator, and it will keep you around to take care of your spouse, family, parents, and friends.

As children of God, we should not fixate on the facts or the ongoing research, but simply adjust as needed as new data is gathered and new understanding is achieved in order to avoid driving ourselves into a frenzy of anxiety. After all, fear is not of God, and although we should strive to take care of everybody, we must always be aligned with Him. *(Continued in COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part IV - What Happens in 2022?)*

Pray



**Numbers 21:6-9** “<sup>6</sup>Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup>So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and against you; intercede with the Lord, that He will remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people. <sup>8</sup>Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and put it on a flag pole; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, and looks at it, will live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a bronze serpent and put it on the flag pole; and it came about, that if a serpent bit someone, and he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.” *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part IV - What Happens in 2022?*

What is the plan for COVID-19 in 2022? Should we let it manage our lives, or can we manage COVID-19? Do we have a choice in the matter? Should we care about what others do to help fight COVID-19 infections and stop the spread of new variants? What if the question was: Should we care if someone at any age decides to eat only candy all day every day as their meal, regardless of what occurs? Both of these questions have the same answer: yes.

As Christians, we should care about saving souls, regardless. The candy question is easy, as you can see what actually happens if someone decides to just eat candy (and replace water with sodas) every day. So, why should trying to stop COVID-19 variants from wreaking havoc on society be any different? With variants continuing their mayhem, the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will most likely have allowed you to experience some type of event beyond your control in order to understand others and make next step decisions for 2022.

### **What might happen with COVID-19 in 2022?**

There are all kinds of viruses worldwide, but COVID-19 is currently the most impactful globally. Researchers are reviewing various options and preparing for all possible eventualities of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on data as of December 31, 2021, researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have summarized the current variants of most concern: Omicron and Delta.

#### **Omicron - B.1.1.529**

First identified: South Africa

Spread: Appears to spread more easily than other variants, including Delta.

Severe illness and death: Due to the small number of cases, the current severity of illness and death associated with this variant is unclear.

Vaccine: Breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are expected, but vaccines are effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. Early evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who become infected with the Omicron variant can spread the virus to others. All FDA-approved or authorized vaccines are expected to be effective against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Treatments: Some monoclonal antibody treatments may not be as effective against infection with Omicron.

#### **Delta - B.1.617.2**

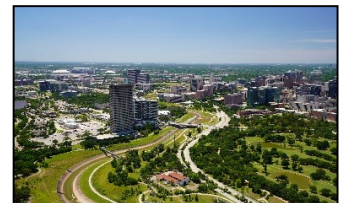
First identified: India

Spread: Spreads more easily than other variants.

Severe illness and death: May cause more severe cases than the other variants.

Vaccine: Breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are expected, but vaccines are effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. Early evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who become infected with the Delta variant can spread the virus to others. All FDA-approved or authorized vaccines are effective against severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

Treatments: Nearly all variants circulating in the United States respond to treatment with FDA-authorized monoclonal antibody treatments.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part IV - What Happens in 2022? (Continued)*

The CDC is predicting that Omicron will be the dominate variant of concern because it is spreading rapidly. The CDC is working with state and local public health officials to monitor the spread of Omicron. As of December 31, 2021, Omicron has been detected in most states and territories and is rapidly increasing the proportion of COVID-19 cases it is causing.

Since Omicron is spreading rapidly, the CDC has outlined key points for this variant.

Vaccines. Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. However, breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are likely to occur. With other variants, like Delta, vaccines have remained effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. The recent emergence of Omicron further emphasizes the importance of vaccination and boosters.

Treatments. Scientists are working to determine how well existing treatments for COVID-19 work. Based on the changed genetic make-up of Omicron, some treatments are likely to remain effective while others may be less effective.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part IV - What Happens in 2022? (Continued)*

### Tools to Fight Omicron

#### Vaccines.

- Vaccines remain the best public health measure to protect people from COVID-19, slow transmission, and reduce the likelihood of new variants emerging.
- COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death.
- Scientists are currently investigating Omicron, including how protected fully vaccinated people will be against infection, hospitalization, and death.
- CDC recommends that everyone eligible for a vaccine protect themselves from COVID-19 by getting fully vaccinated.

#### Masks.

- Masks offer protection against all variants.
- CDC continues to recommend wearing a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high community transmission, regardless of vaccination status.
- CDC provides advice about masks for people who want to learn more about what type of mask is right for them depending on their circumstances.

#### Testing.

- Tests can tell you if you are currently infected with COVID-19.
- Two types of tests are used to test for current infection: nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) and antigen tests. NAAT and antigen tests can only tell you if you have a current infection.
- Individuals can use the COVID-19 Viral Testing Tool to help determine what kind of test to seek.
- Additional tests would be needed to determine if your infection was caused by Omicron.

CDC scientists are working with partners to gather data and virus samples that can be studied to continue to answer important questions about the Omicron variant (Source: CDC.gov).

**But God**

<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part IV - What Happens in 2022? (Continued)*

As 2022 progresses, we will come to understand the impacts of scientific studies and trials during this pandemic. As Christians it is essential to be cautious, remain vigilant and remember who "holds us up", God. *(Continued in COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part V - Is COVID-19 Here to Stay?)*

#### Stay Aware



**Revelation 2:2-3** “<sup>2</sup>I know your deeds and your labor and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil people, and you have put those who call themselves apostles to the test, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false; <sup>3</sup>and you have perseverance and have endured on account of My name, and have not become weary.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part V - Is COVID-19 Here to Stay?*

Have you ever experienced a severely foggy morning? Typically, you know what it takes to allow the fog to dissipate so you can plan your next steps. You are not completely certain that conditions will change, but you know from historical data, forecasts, locations, research, and experience that the foggy conditions will eventually change because of the vastness of nature's cycles. But what about COVID-19 variants? Do we have a way to predict when new variants may emerge or when existing variants may cease to exist?

Researchers are comparing COVID-19 to other pathogens that have wreaked havoc in society. Some state that "remnants" of the 1918 virus are still present in some areas. So, does this mean that COVID-19 is here to stay? There are varying opinions on what "here to stay" means, but we are dealing with a virus. Here to stay in one sense can mean endemic. In layman's terms, Merriam-Webster defines an endemic as "1: growing or existing in a certain place or region (endemic diseases endemic wildlife); 2: common in a particular area or field."



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that the term endemic refers to the "constant presence and/or usual prevalence of a disease within a population in a certain geographic area." The CDC also says that a disease is endemic when it is continuously circulating in an area at a baseline (or endemic) level and in a predictable pattern. This level is not necessarily the desired level, which may be zero, but rather the observed level. Thus, the baseline level is often regarded as the expected level of the disease.

All of this is great science, but how does this impact me living in the real world, trying to stay safe and to avoid these COVID-19 variants? As a Christian, you understand that you live in this world but are not of the world and must always strive to understand ways to maintain your spiritual and physical wellness to stay aligned with God's plan. So, the simple answer is to access empowering information to maneuver and avoid obstacles that may impact and/or derail your journey. A key point is that protection against COVID-19 for the vulnerable is at the population level and not at the level of the individual. Population immunity reduces both the viral spread and impacts.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part V - Is COVID-19 Here to Stay? (Continued)*

### How are researchers keeping up with the next steps for COVID-19?

According to the CDC, researchers collect input from multiple entities to identify and update key questions as part of the CDC Public Health Science Agenda for COVID-19. These include updates to ensure that, as things change, information is disseminated as a source of truth. As of January 31, 2022, there are several questions outlined in this agenda, and these seem to be relevant to understanding the impacts of variants across societal boundaries, as noted in a question related to variants below:

### How can the public health community effectively and efficiently enhance surveillance for known and emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants?

#### *Key activities - Variants*

- Measuring prevalence and incidence of variants of concern in various populations and settings, including among the origins and destinations of travelers to the United States and among immunocompromised persons
- Tracking evolution of new variants, particularly in immunocompromised populations
- Increasing timeliness and accuracy of regional estimates of variant proportions in circulation in the United States and globally
- Determining the optimal level of timeliness and accuracy of genomic surveillance needed to effectively detect and track variants
- Improving data quality: enhancing genomic surveillance, increasing social and demographic data completeness, integrating travel history, ensuring a representative sample of specimens
- Effectively communicating health information about variants to the public
- Characterizing the effect of changing SARS-CoV-2 nomenclature on the grouping of variants and how it impacts prevention strategies based on variant circulation
- Exploring wastewater surveillance, including for persons living in congregate settings and other populations at risk for COVID-19

*(Source: CDC.gov)*

<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part V - Is COVID-19 Here to Stay? (Continued)*

Researchers continue to review various options and prepare for all aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including understanding endemic possibilities as variants continue to wreak havoc. Even though we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential for everyone to stay vigilant and understand the impacts of science. After all, we do live among all kinds of viruses. *(Continued in COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part VI - Variant Trends)*

#### Global



**1 Timothy 6:20-21** “<sup>20</sup>T Timothy, protect what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly, empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”— <sup>21</sup>which some have professed and thereby have gone astray from the faith.” *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part VI - Variant Trends*

Everyone knows that when you write something, it becomes a historical artifact. But what do you do with such an artifact? Do you view it as a trend during a certain period of time, and do not bother to reflect on it? Or do you view it as “a classic—never outdated” and take the perspective that it may come back again? There are several examples of trends that are very visible, ranging from fashion to vehicles. Everyone knows that trends come and go, but if you understand what a trend is, you learn to make choices and understand what is truly trendy versus what is considered classic. A classic never changes; it just re-emerges and picks up where you left off, regardless of conditions.

*“This is all good, and I would say that I like trendy cars and classic clothes, but what does this have to do with me and the next phase of the COVID-19 variants?”* COVID-19 can be viewed in the same light. Viruses don’t just disappear; they just have a harder time finding a host “cell” to “break in” and replicate once the population starts to reach herd or vaccine-induced immunity. Therefore, researchers will continue to study COVID-19 variant trends in order to deter future impacts and develop toolkits for appropriate responses. The key is understanding when or where they may re-emerge (the “classic”), tracking trends, and blocking their spread into areas of mass infection.



### COVID-19 Community Levels - Tools

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently published additional tools to help communities understand data and trends including COVID-19 Community Levels (*A measure of the impact of COVID-19 illness on health and healthcare systems*). These tools help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. COVID-19 Community Levels can help communities and individuals make decisions based on their local context and their unique needs. Community vaccination coverage and other local information, like early alerts from surveillance, such as through wastewater or the number of emergency department visits for COVID-19, when available, can also inform decision making for health officials and individuals. (Source: CDC.gov)

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part VI - Variant Trends (Continued)*

### Reflections on COVID-19 Variants

It is always good to reflect on past experiences. However, such reflections should not be guided by emotions or distractors because you may miss the message.

One FWCOC member was asked: What did you “get out” of experiencing the various trends associated with the COVID-19 variants?

Responses:

- Spiritual connection. I grew closer to God and felt strong linkages to the Scriptures while allowing God to order my steps. I also re-organized my spiritual “toolkit.”
- Wellness. I am grateful that I did not contract a COVID-19 infection. I adapted to the constraints and created a modified exercise regimen.
- Reset and renew. Through the ability to reset and renew, I have found ways to determine what is really important and how I allocate time and streamline my way of living.
- Idea flow and forward thinking. I validated my thinking about always trying to look past problems and not being bombarded by any perceived failures that block new ideas. I learned to use all available options to avoid “missing spiritual prompting messages” or getting distracted/disappointed.
- Uncontrolled chaos. I tried to understand what I could truly control and what I didn’t have any control over, knowing that the journey must continue.
- Convenience. Watching society pivot, catch up and realize that having your own and working virtually is exceptional and provides a more productive way to get the job done, regardless of magnitude.
- Takeout/curbside. Continue using takeout/curbside pickup for various items going forward. This makes things convenient, as I can order at night and plan pickups based on my schedule while supporting local businesses.
- Comfort zone. I learned how to get out of my comfort zone, adapt, try new things, and find ways to “knock it out of the park.”

<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Awareness as Variants Continue to Wreak Havoc, Part VI - Variant Trends (Continued)*

Trends throughout the COVID-19 pandemic should have allowed Christians to understand that our faith should be strong, regardless of perceived conditions.

### Reset, Renew



**Psalms 143:5** “I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your accomplishments; I reflect on the work of Your hands.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** 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*

## College and Young Professionals Ministry

*Inspiring and Preparing for the Future while walking the Christian Path*

Do you remember being in college and preparing for your career? Do you remember the job search? Did you get overwhelmed by job offers, or were you struggling to find anyone interested? Some graduates receive a dozen offers or more across different sectors, while others struggle to get just one. All factors being equal (grades, coursework, background, contacts, abilities, etc.), it is noticeably different when you keep God first and have people who are strongly aligned to the church and striving to always help you succeed. This is just one example how God can move you further and others do not understand how you were able to do it.

You may not notice the differences right away, but you can understand them years later as you look back and view the history of your journey. Regardless, keeping God first during your journey through college will help you to continue to progress as you prepare to become a professional.

### Introduction

A day in the life of a college student and young professional can hide snares that can be detrimental to your spiritual, emotional, and physical growth. Young adults need guidance in their lives, and the challenges can range from deciding whether to even continue your education after high school graduation to where to study, what career path to choose, whether to take a career-oriented job, and how to navigate the "forks" in the road during your journey.

**Making**

**Decisions**



College life brings a different vibe, a set of new rules, and a new navigation plan that you will have to learn, follow, and complete to be successful. Organizing your life at this point is at a whole new level, and the help your parents (and adult mentors/advisors) gave you in high school was training for this new life. College students must also manage a level of cultural diversity that is often different from that with which they are familiar. Choosing a career and maintaining academic standards in college will be vital to your success. College students have many obstacles to overcome, from managing finances to staying healthy, building a strong "morals" minded network of friends and acquaintances, managing relationships, accomplishing milestones and making key decisions for further growth.

Transitioning from college to professional life can be another daunting task. There are stressors that accompany living alone, including making key decisions, sustaining a productive and prosperous career, and building the life that you dreamed of. Finding resources to help you navigate is crucial to success, and the College and Young Professionals ministry is there to help with all the needs of young adults, applying Christian values and the experience and knowledge of the professionals who run it and of the volunteers who offer essential resources.

<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*

## College and Young Professionals Ministry

*Inspiring and Preparing for the Future while walking the Christian Path (Continued)*

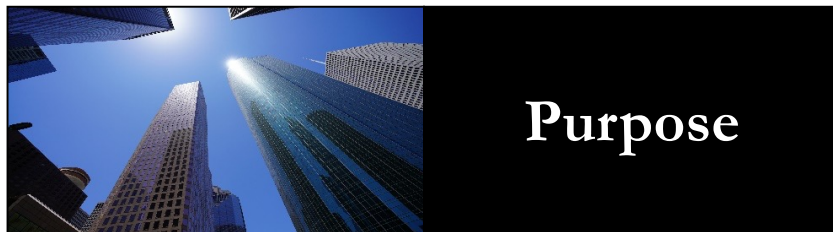
### College to Young Professional

The purpose of the College and Young Professionals ministry is to encourage college students to remain faithful to God as they pursue their educational goals – to organize activities that encourage students' spiritual development and involvement in the Lord's work.

Bro. Stephen Henley knows all too well of the obstacles that young adults face, and he has an arsenal of resources to help them to navigate and make good decisions. The College and Young Professionals ministry offers a variety of resources, activities, and community services that support the efforts of young adults from their first year of college through to the age of 27. Many of the activities are the result of students asking the "hard questions" about finances, choosing a career, managing relationships, and navigating the Christian life.

The ministry supports various activities, including College Bible Class on Wednesday night, College Ladies Zoom Fellowships, and Bible classes on Thursday, held on the campus of Texas Southern University (TSU). The Thursday night Bible class is hosted through a campus religious organization known as the Tigers for Christ, which is led by Cedric Lee (President of Tigers for Christ.) In addition, the ministry sponsors a Young Professional Transitions Workshop as a resource that includes a range of seminars (paying taxes, buying a home, utilizing principles for Christian living) and a career fair to explore job opportunities.

The ministry also sponsors various community efforts, including creating and sending care packages to college students, distributing Mana bags (with items such as socks, tee shirts, toiletries, snacks, and a ministry tape) to the homeless/veterans, and sewing and donating masks to the VA Hospital.



**1 Peter 5:5** <sup>5</sup>"You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble" (*Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB)*)

**Ministry:** College and Young Professionals Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Stephen Henley, Otis Phillips, Gary Grandison, Angel Grandison, James Dean Colbert, Cynthia Colbert, Cedric Lee.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Singles Ministry**

*Enjoying the Fruits of Being Single*

Singles have many questions that they may ask, and many people pose questions that singles do not necessarily want to answer. Questions such as – How can being single assist the Church? How can I stay focused on God's work and still be happy? What are you doing with your time that builds and edifies you? Do you think you are on an island alone during your journey? When does patience turn into impatience? Oftentimes it may be a good idea to ask singles this question: "What questions would you like to ask and then answer based on your ideas? Explain." There are thus many questions with which singles battle as they find their place within the Church.

According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau estimates from 2020, 45% of the U.S. adult population is unmarried – that is, never married, divorced, or widowed. There is an array of singles groups in the Houston area, and there are numerous social networks for singles that are great for meeting others. Nevertheless, recent research shows that some people view singlehood as a happy destination rather than a stop on the journey to marriage.

### **Christian Singles**

The Fifth Ward Church of Christ Singles Ministry is designed for unmarried young adults between 25 and 50 years old. Its mission is to serve Christians who are single and who are moving forward for the cause of Christ through worship, service, and fellowship, and its purpose is to help singles to know God and to give them what they need to survive in a single world.

The FWCOC Singles Ministry was created from a singles bible class, and Brother Timothy Jones, a deacon of FWCOC, has held the leadership position of the Singles Ministry for the past five years. He solicits ideas for events and programs from his core group of members (Michelle Jones, Alna Henry, Walter Lane, Amber Morrow, and Ginger Ross).

Recruitment efforts for the 50–100 member group involve, at any given time, a balance between engaging new members, identifying the status of those members, ministering to the newly baptized, and introducing singles' bible classes. The Singles Ministry engages in several activities throughout the year, including Singles Roundtable Discussions, Singles Home Fellowships, Singles Visitation to the sick and shut-in, Singles Movie Nights, Singles Weekend Trips, National Singles Seminars, Singles ALIVE Conferences, and an array of community service events.

**Never Alone**



<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*

## **Singles Ministry**

*Enjoying the Fruits of Being Single*

Brother Timothy Jones is most proud of forming bonds with and among the members of the Singles Ministry. He states, "Members are really making an effort to be there for each other, sharing their experiences, and learning the necessary tools of being a single Christian." About his leadership, he says, "This mission is definitely not about me, it is about God, serving God in this capacity, and being a servant for God who helps His servants be the best that they can be."

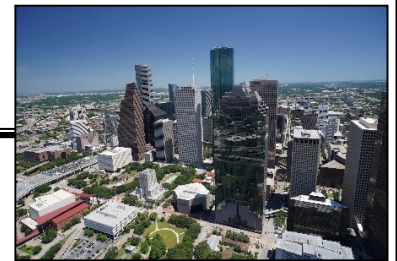
### **Being Single in Today's Society**

To be single in our Christian society is to be different, and not, for most of us, what we planned. Yet single adults describe the day-to-day positives of being a Christian single person as having a relationship with God, a greater purpose and direction in life, greater well-being, and Christian friendships and values. By no means do we have all the answers to singleness, but we are aware of the struggles, difficulties, and blessings that singleness brings. The road can be painful, but it does not have to be joyless, and identifying and discovering the struggles of our singles is a unique experience in itself.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the struggle has been very real, and leadership has been devoted to and has created ways to stay connected with single members. For instance, the Singles Roundtable Discussion is a venue at which a topic is presented and discussed throughout a one-and-a-half-hour meeting, and the topics have included everyday single living during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the topic discussion, singles engage and share thoughts, comments, and concerns within the group, and an atmosphere of deep concern and camaraderie is evident.

Christian singles must always strive to keep God first, regardless of perceived circumstances.

## **God First!**



**2 Samuel 22:21-22** <sup>21</sup>"The Lord has treated me in accordance with my righteousness; In accordance with the cleanliness of my hands He has repaid me. <sup>22</sup>For I have kept the ways of the Lord, And have not acted wickedly against my God." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Singles.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Curtis Doyle, Timothy Jones.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part I - Tangible Assets*

Some say that your past experiences, achievements, successes, and disappointments are assets in your life. If that's true, is your life analogous to running a business, with tangible and intangible assets? If you ask business owners, most will tell you that assets—both tangible and intangible—are critical indicators of a business's value and overall profitability. "So, are you saying my life is a business?" In some ways, yes. I am saying that your life is like running a business, at least as it relates to intangible and tangible assets. "Okay, I'm confused. I have never run a business, so explain." Good point!

Let's apply this analogy to weather disasters—tropical storms, hurricanes, linked to science—and in Part I look at the tangible assets that help you maintain your stability and overall well-being during such events.

### **Tangible Asset Preparedness During Extreme Weather Events**

The COVID-19 pandemic means that, in this day and age, everyone has directly or indirectly experienced the reality of science; everyone now understands that science is not a luxury, but a necessity. So why should extreme weather events be any different? Yes, we know that extreme weather will eventually end, but it usually lasts for a period of time that is not exactly known.

One way to understand weather events and their associated impacts is to understand how systems interact across the world. A SYSTEM is a key concept of science and easily understood by most in science. A SYSTEM as defined by leading science researchers is a group of things or events which can be defined, at least in part, by boundaries that one person can communicate to another, which enable it to be discussed and studied more effectively. This can range from ecological systems (ponds, lakes, oceans, etc.) to mechanical systems (gondolas, water systems, pumps, etc.) and body systems (respiratory, cardiovascular, integumentary, etc.).



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part I - Tangible Assets (Continued)*

If we look at the world as a global collection of systems that interact across seasons, we can understand the impacts of a hurricane or tropical storm. “Okay, that’s great for a science lecture, but what does this have to do with me getting through a storm? I just want it to go away so I can get back to normal!” You can easily be impacted by weather events without understanding the impacts across systems. It is critical to understand how systems work as simple activities during extreme weather events become rationed or unavailable and the messaging from officials becomes confusing.

Tangible assets are easy to obtain if you have the resources and prepare well in advance of tropical storms and hurricanes. The National Weather Service (NWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are two organizations that work in concert to help in your planning of tangible items before storms. Highlights of both are noted below:

- NWS provides weather, water, and climate data, forecasts and warnings for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy.
- The mission of NOAA is to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, to share that knowledge and information with others, and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

Entities turn to these organizations to help forecast weather events across the world. For those in states near saltwater ecological systems that are prone to tropical storms and hurricanes, NWS and NOAA advise people to prepare in the following ways:

- Determine your risk (*storm surge, strong winds, tornadoes, flooding, etc.*)
- Develop an evaluation plan (*evacuation zones, bag of supplies/necessities ready, evacuation routes, plan for pets, evacuation for local orders, etc.*)
- Assemble disaster supplies (*food, water, medications, full tank of gas, batteries, generators, phone chargers, cash, etc.*)
- Get an insurance checkup (*review policies/documents, flood insurance*)
- Strengthen your home (*windows, loose outdoor items, trees, vehicles, secure doors*)
- Help your neighbor (*help them prepare and evacuate if necessary, check-in on them*)
- Complete a written plan (*contact list, maintain important documents for easy access, have a way to share plans*)

(Sources: [noaa.gov](http://noaa.gov), [weather.gov](http://weather.gov))



<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*

### Health and Wellness Ministry

*Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part I - Tangible Assets (Continued)*



### Plan. Prepare. Act.

A key part of tangible plans is documentation and captures of the actual visual scenes (pictures, video clips), including, as much as possible, recordings from before, during, and after. Digital devices are common, and you can always save such recordings to storage areas (email, servers, online cloud systems, fire-/water-proof cases, etc.) to keep a record of any damage. Just remember to stay alert and to document your experiences and store them in a place that is safe. *(Continued in Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part II - Intangible Assets)*

**Matthew 8:23-27** <sup>23</sup>"When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. <sup>24</sup>And behold, a violent storm developed on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. <sup>25</sup>And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!" <sup>26</sup>He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. <sup>27</sup>The men were amazed, and said, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part II – Inherent Intangible Assets*

How do we conduct ourselves during extreme weather events? Do we just accept our circumstances and wait for things to blow over without further thought? Do we lose control of ourselves and act out as the things that we can't touch and control start to become derailed? Or do we stay focused, use our capabilities as a way to cope, deal with the moment, and move on from one experience to the next?

The key here is to understand the valuable inherent intangible assets that we have in our lives. This is all good, but how does it relate to Part I? Great question; in Part I, the focus was on the tangible assets (cash, material possessions) in our lives, and here we are reviewing the things we possess that cannot be touched, commonly referred to as inherent intangible assets. Merriam-Webster defines intangible as “an asset (such as goodwill) that is not corporeal; an abstract quality or attribute; impalpable (incapable of being felt by touch).” Typical intangible assets include computer software, digital imagery (pictures, video), or patents and trademarks (ownership of inventions or brand names) that can be linked to a dollar value and can thus be regarded as worldly possessions.

But what about the inherent intangibles that you have as a living human being – things that are part of you but which you cannot touch? Inherent intangible assets can be harder to value and are often taken for granted until you need to use them. Such assets can include an educated mind that can apply critical and rational thought processes; positive and negative experiences to draw upon; value-added ideas that you have during your ministry work in the church; and faith in God to order your steps in taking action, regardless of circumstances. No matter how you look at it, you need to understand and value the intangible assets that are part of your natural state of being during this journey, because anything you truly value you will care for and respect.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part II – Inherent Intangible Assets (Continued)*

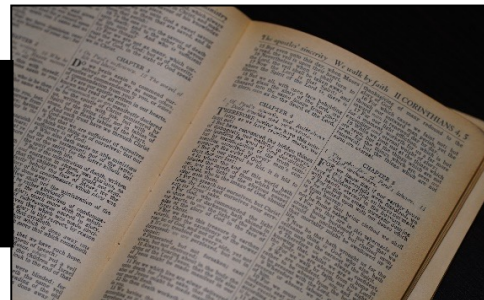
#### **Inherent Intangible Asset Preparedness During Extreme Weather Events**

To help you to maximize and value your inherent intangible assets, consider the possibilities from the list below, from those that have a background in science and have experienced weather events across the world:

- (1) Have an open mind, especially when key officials from different regions are saying the same thing about a weather event and know your cut-off point—the time by which you must make a decision and act. Don't assume they are wrong about what is going to happen, even if they have been wrong before. They typically show all likely directions for weather events using various models to give advance notice to any region that might be in danger.
- (2) Put alerts on your digital devices so information gets sent to you (email, text, phone) about such events, so all you need to do is check and review it.
- (3) “Get out of your own way”—listen, learn, and stay informed early when the possibilities of such events are announced. When I say “early”, I mean advanced weather systems that can warn days (or weeks) in advance; when I say “stay informed”, I mean listening to reports from people in affected areas that add detail and confidence to early warnings.
- (4) Maintain a flexible mindset and the ability to move forward, change direction, and make rational decisions. It is important to stay informed before, during and after an extreme weather event.
- (5) Always stay prayed-up and ask God to continue to keep, remind, and guide you on what to do when the warnings are given early and as the event approaches, to help order your steps. Be open to the guidance and determine what you need to do based on this prompting.

These inherent intangible assets should be simple, but just think about what can happen during a panic or catastrophic event. Remaining calm and centered always works and allows you to think clearly, but having inherent intangible assets allows you to look past weather extremes to understand the impact without “losing it”, because you remain stable and grounded.

**Study**



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *Maintaining Wellness During Storms: Part II – Inherent Intangible Assets (Continued)*

Imagine you have a credit card or cash to buy gas, but all of the stations are out of gas or cannot process transactions, or you are inaccessible or cannot leave home because of extreme weather, or the power is out and all your communication devices have been impacted and the water is rising. What can you do? Anything? Nothing? Or did you use your sharp, inherent intangible assets to listen and leave early, based on your rational thinking?

If you live in Texas, experienced the February 2021 winter freeze and the sporadic power—and water—shutdowns, and you could not keep warm, you can easily understand how having inherent intangible assets becomes far more important during such events. You may have prepared and planned and had all the tangible assets you thought necessary, but without a mindset to stay stable and to think your way out of a problem, you may have suffered more than necessary as the problems continued longer than expected. If you ignore the inherent intangible assets in your life, you can still stock up on all the tangible assets that you can afford and yet be unable to maneuver through weather events as factors beyond your control take over and start dictating the situation.

Incorporating both tangible and inherent intangible assets into your weather event planning is key to making sure your journey is not so badly interrupted that it takes you off-course and away from God. Remember to always keep God first as the most important part of your valuable inherent intangible assets—regardless of what happens to your tangible assets. After all, do we ever truly own anything that we can “reach out and touch” on this Earth?



**2 Corinthians 4:16-18** <sup>16</sup>"Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup>while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

### *The Drive-Thru Parade*

Is the church a movement, a museum, a group, a worship service, or a community? Or a combination of all of these? Some have said the church is analogous to a herd of sheep that contains all kinds of personalities who possess a common factor: the need to maintain equilibrium, to thrive, to survive, and to stay away from things that may impact their growth. However, it takes a strong-minded, grounded individual to appreciate how the church must accept that not all of the sheep in the flock will act the same way. This is how established churches must seek to maintain, lead, and support their congregations: some members strive for righteousness, but may not do so consistently as their journeys are impacted by changing factors, while others allow their steps to be ordered and then act accordingly, regardless of circumstances.

“Okay, so now you’re calling me a sheep?” Well, in this case, yes. Sheep need to be guided, watched over, and at times even controlled by a shepherd. Elders are to be shepherds of God’s flock as members grow in the word and continue on the path to righteousness. As members continue their journey, all will, at some point, interact with—or become—a Seasoned Saint.

### **The Seasoned Saints Drive-Thru Parade – Retirement Appreciation**

There are ways to reward achievement and commitment to others that recognize different circumstances and mindsets, but how do you celebrate an Elder’s retirement during a pandemic? One way is to do a drive-thru parade to allow all to adhere to safety precautions.



<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*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

### *The Drive-Thru Parade (Continued)*

On February 28, 2021, the Seasoned Saints ministry facilitated a drive-thru parade as a way to offer thanks to Bro. Jasper J. Muckelroy, Jr. on his retirement from the office of Elder at the FWCOC. Members were able to drive-thru with custom banners on their car windows and wave to him and his family members as they were seated, and each car stopped to give them the chance to read the banners and to wave to members. For those who missed the parade, here are some excerpts from the flyers distributed by the Senior Saints ministry:

“Our man of God, one who desired the work of an Elder, an earthen vessel, and one chosen by our Heavenly Father to keep watch over His flock made the heartfelt decision to retire from Office of Elder at Fifth Ward Church of Christ, Houston, Texas, effective Sunday, January 31, 2021.

Bro. Jasper J. Muckelroy, Jr., a man of high honor and respect was born January 9, 1944 to Jasper J. Muckelroy, Sr. and the late Anexial Jackson Muckelroy in San Luis Obispo, California, where his father was stationed during World War II (WWII). Born into a loving family, Bro. Muckelroy is the oldest of six children to include four sons and two daughters.

After Mr. Muckelroy, Sr.'s WWII tour-of-duty ended in San Luis Obispo, he moved his family back to Kilgore, TX (his Father's original home), and where our Bro. Jasper, Jr. completed the first grade. Their family eventually settled in Houston, TX in 1952. In Bro. Muckelroy's early years in Houston, his parents enrolled him in Bruce Elementary School starting in the third grade. His Mother nurtured him by pouring her life into her firstborn, resulting in him completely skipping the second grade because of his noticeable brilliance/aptitude. His time at Bruce Elementary was from the third through fifth grades. Classmates of his were the likes of the late Mickey Leland, former U.S. House of Representatives and Harold Dutton, current Texas State House of Representatives.

The Muckelroy family moved to another location in Houston, where Bro. Muckelroy attended Atherton Elementary School; there he completed the sixth grade. As he grew, he attended E.O. Smith Jr. High School and sang first tenor in the Glee Club during his seventh and eighth grades years. From age eleven through thirteen, he was the paperboy in the Fifth Ward area. So, he was very familiar with the Fifth Ward community from his youth up, as he threw the paper to residents on Stonewall, Market, Waco, Gregg, Bringhurst Streets, and Lyons Avenue.”



<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*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

### *The Drive-Thru Parade (Continued)*

“Beginning the ninth grade, he attended Cashmere Garden High School and graduated in 1961. Upon completion, Bro. Muckelroy enrolled in Texas Southern University in 1961 while working to pay for his college education. During this time, Bro. Muckelroy and his close friend went to purchase hamburgers and sodas at Bro. Jacy Power’s hamburger shop. There, he saw a gorgeous young lady working named Sherry Dianne Jackson and was smitten by her beauty! He told his friend, “one day, I’m going to marry her”. Needless to say, they began to date. During their courtship, he learned more about Christ and the Church, and was baptized November 1, 1965.

...And on July 29, 1967, he held his promise to his friend. Bro. Jasper Muckelroy, Jr. & Sis. Sherry Dianne Jackson were united in marriage. Sis. Corliss Powers Hamilton and Bro. E’van Powers were the flower girl and ring bearer, respectively. At the writing of this document, both he and Sis. Muckelroy have been married for fifty-three years!

Also occurring in 1967, Bro. Muckelroy was drafted by the United States Army, and approximately two weeks after their wedding, he joined basic training in Fort Polk, Louisiana. As mentioned, because of his noticeable intellect, and now college attendance and leadership, he was selected and participated in the U.S. Army’s Advanced Training Program at Fort Gordon, GA (near Augusta, GA) receiving top secret clearance for Defense information. Following this extremely specific training, Bro. Muckelroy was deployed to Vietnam. Note that his tour-of-duty in Vietnam occurred during the era of time that Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy were assassinated, and our country was in turmoil.

As many were, Bro. Muckelroy was injured in Vietnam and many lost their lives. He returned to the United States in 1968 being stationed at Fort Lewis in Tacoma, WA, where he completed his Military Service. Oddly, his brother-in-law, Franklin Donahoe, was stationed at Fort Lewis, as well. His total time at Fort Lewis was August 1968 to January 1970. After a three-year duration in the U.S. Army, Bro. Muckelroy received an Honorable Discharge in February 1970. Throughout his service, he held the position of Platoon Leader and the Office of Sergeant.

Having been raised with strong family values, both Jasper & Sherry Dianne focused on their own family and were blessed with two sons, Corey and Kenny. Just as Corey’s and Kenny’s parents taught them, their families are faithful members of the Lord’s Church. Living in Dallas, Corey is their eldest son and married to Lakeitha; the grandchildren are Malcolm and Jacqueline. Living in Houston, Kenny is their youngest son and married to Jocelyn; the grandchildren are Kennedy and Jackson. All Bro. & Sis. Muckelroy’s grandchildren are blessings to them, and with the favor of God they are flourishing.

Throughout his time back in the United States and throughout his professional career, Bro. Muckelroy fully immersed himself in his service to God at Fifth Ward Church of Christ, and he never looked back. His works at the Fifth Ward congregation are numerous.”

<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*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

### *The Drive-Thru Parade (Continued)*

#### The Anthology

“Because of Bro. Muckelroy’s level of commitment to our Lord, one can see how his life was being prepared for the role of an Elder for all those years. Let us never forget that along his Christian journey the invaluable commitment of his wife Dianne as we fondly call her. Through her he was introduced to the Church of Christ. This virtuous woman made room for his spiritual obligations while maintaining a Christian home for their family. Documented below are his works as a Servant of God.

As a Deacon. Bro. Jasper, J. Muckelroy, Jr. was ordained as a Deacon in 1985. His leadership included the following works:

- Seasoned Saints Ministry; Prison Ministry; Singles Ministry; Counseling; Drug & Alcohol Abuse; Conducted Weddings; and Song Leader.

As an Elder. Bro. Jasper J. Muckelroy, Jr. was ordained as an Elder at Fifth Ward Church of Christ, August 11, 2011. His leadership included oversight of the following works:

- Seasoned Saints Ministry; Grief Counseling; Funerals; Drug & Alcohol Abuse; Alzheimer’s Support Group; Education & Teaching Ministry; and Church History.

What a man of God! As you can see, our beloved brother is one who has the love of Christ in his heart, and he has demonstrated this love through the life he has lived. He can truly say "May the Work I’ve Done, Speak for Me.”



<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief

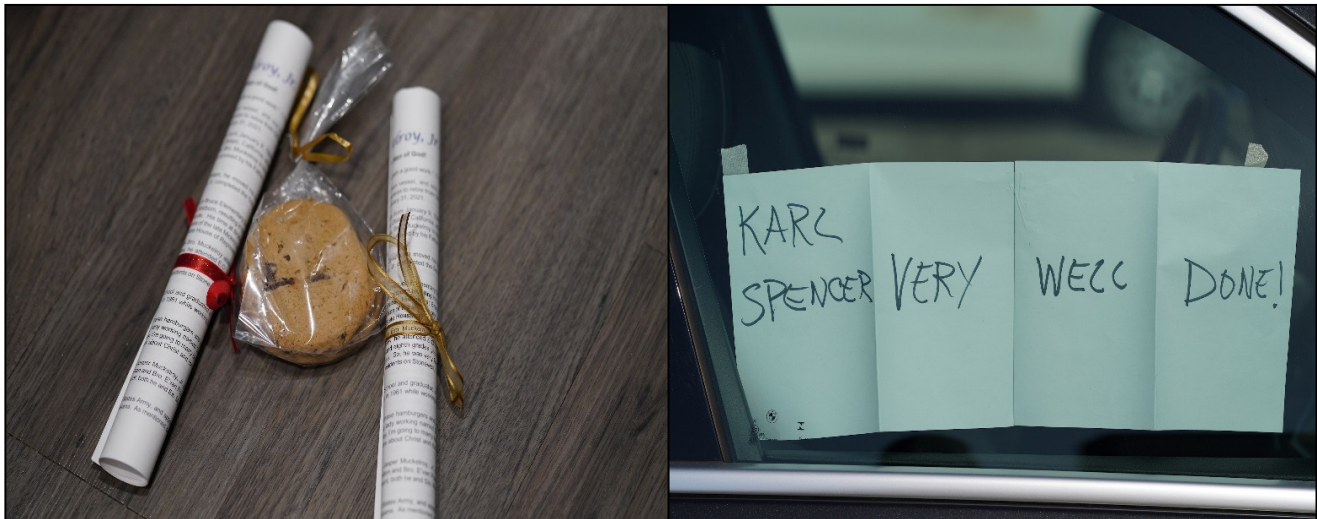


### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

### *The Drive-Thru Parade (Continued)*

“Bro. Jasper J. Muckelroy, Jr. and his beloved wife Sis. Sherry Dianne have given their lives for the cause of Christ. They raised their family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He is a man of valor, and after all the work he has done for Fifth Ward Church of Christ, the Office of Elder, Pastor, Bishop and Overseer was more than befitting. Bro. & Sister Muckelroy, on behalf of the Seasoned Saints Ministry Core Team, we express our sincere gratitude for your leadership, guidance and support every step of the way. You have our highest honor and respect. We will continue in your footprint in the advancement of this Ministry, and we wish you well in your next Chapter.”



Great synopsis provided by the Seasoned Saints ministry. We thank God for their creativity and ways to celebrate mastery, regardless of the constraints of the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, the Drive-Thru Parade.

**1 Peter 5:1-3** <sup>1</sup>“Therefore, I urge elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, *and* one who is also a fellow partaker of the glory that is to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion but voluntarily, according to *the will of* God; and not with greed but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup> nor yet as domineering over those assigned to your care, but by proving to be examples to the flock.”  
(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Seasoned Saints.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy & Sheila Mobley, A.W. & Iveria Willis, Artie & Katrina Borders, Helen Benjamin, Vivian Rawls, Corliss Hamilton, Cleveland & Sheeree Wirt-Joseph, Juliette Stephens, Jennie Alexander, and Jimmy & Jewel Tarver.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part I – Foundational*

When will this pandemic end? When can I get back to doing what I want and moving forward with my life? These are common questions being asked by most of us who are impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The key answer to ending the pandemic lies in how society responds to what really controls our understanding of COVID-19: science. Science is a broad discipline that spans biological, physical and earth (including space) content and related concepts, and this needs to be recognized, accepted, and realized by all. Most people typically recognize what they acknowledge, and science needs to be acknowledged because it is within all organisms (people, animals, plants, etc...) and abiotic interactions across boundaries.

Regardless of what you do or do not believe, without the concepts that science studies, the human body's systems (respiratory, cardiovascular, nervous, etc...) could not function and you would physically cease to exist – you would not be able to complain about feeling anything at all. We must follow "the science" from reputable scientific and medical institutions that is based on truth, facts, data, collaboration, openness, transparency, and full disclosure. "Ending the pandemic" may not be the right phrase to use just yet, so getting back to some form of normality through controlling and mitigating infections may be a better approach until research validates the long-term options for COVID-19.



### **Fatigue, Lockdowns, and Uncertainty: Moving Past Awareness to Understand Blessings**

Some people say, "I am aware of COVID-19 and some science, but how can this pandemic be a blessing when we don't know the end? I am fatigued from this pandemic. It is unsettling being 'on the edge' of possible strict lockdowns." Awareness is great, but being equipped to make decisions requires an advanced awareness and understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it creates challenges during your journey.

During the pandemic, you must continue to be aware in order to make informed decisions that are researched-based, otherwise you may go down a path that leads to errors, missteps, disappointments, correction, and catastrophic events. If you allow your journey to continue and negotiate the roadblocks associated with the pandemic, you have already been blessed, especially after the first six months. You cannot allow the impacts of COVID-19 to "drive the vehicle" while you sit passively and just go along for the ride. You have to constantly look for options and opportunities to help maintain your physical, mental, and spiritual health, regardless of circumstances.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

"Changing the World for the better Everyday"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## *Ministry In-Brief*



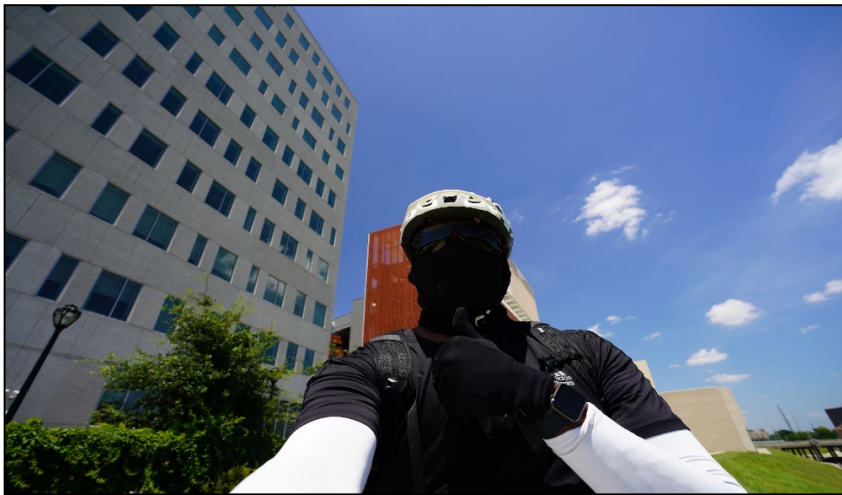
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part I – Foundational (Continued)*

From a congregational standpoint, the church has been preparing and will continue to prepare methods for making broader impacts across continents. We have people all over the world with whom we are connecting; there are no boundaries for the people who tune into the worship service and bible class. This would not have happened so quickly had we not been forced to make challenging decisions and re-group because of the COVID-19 restrictions and constraints. It has thus expanded our outreach efforts. Some are concerned that members may be lost in transition, but, in reality, our faith has grown stronger as everyone has had a chance to stop and look at their options. Unless you are in a situation in which you can't see (or read) or hear anything, such as being hospitalized and unconscious (including a loss of hearing), there is no excuse not to tune in and be involved in services and events.

Some look at this pandemic chaos as a parting of the Red Sea, which we now have a chance to "walk across" and move with caution. You might ask yourself, "Do I stay in my safe place and try not to think or move because the virus might get me if I try to keep going? Or do I keep moving forward; follow the science; accept the constraints and guidelines; stay aware and be safe; do the best I can; trust God to get me through it; and take the new opportunities or perceived failures to grow and serve as they arise?" Christians should always seek ways to grow, shift perspectives and be involved in serving others.



**Pray. Think. Act.**

### **COVID-19 Scientific Research Advances**

In mid-November 2020, several scientific research institutions and collaborating partners announced preliminary results of various research studies on COVID-19 vaccines. The speed of this process has been massively accelerated by the use of advanced biological research techniques and their associated technologies, including genetics. This is great news, but what does it mean for current infections, transmission, and lockdown restrictions?

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part I – Foundational (Continued)*

First and foremost, there are critical terms you should know in order to understand how such advances will impact society. These include immunity, vaccine, vaccination, and immunization. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines these terms as:

- Immunity – Protection from an infectious disease. If you are immune to a disease, you can be exposed to it without becoming infected.
- Vaccine – A product that stimulates a person's immune system to produce immunity to a specific disease, protecting the person from that disease.
- Vaccination – The act of introducing a vaccine into the body to produce immunity to a specific disease.
- Immunization – A process by which a person becomes protected against a disease through vaccination. This term is often used interchangeably with vaccination or inoculation.



## COVID-19

Just because scientific advances have been announced does not mean that we should stop taking precautions, disregard safety measures, ignore the science, and just wait for the vaccine. Yes, we should all be optimistic about scientific research-based efforts to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 infections, but that is only the first step, and we must do our part in this team effort. Approvals, logistics, distribution, vaccine acceptance, public confidence and targeted individuals are the next steps in the process of starting to move toward normality. Once key elements are in place, researchers around the globe will continue to track and contact-trace the virus, continue to study the vaccine's efficacy and effectiveness, and work toward vaccine-induced herd immunity, which, based on past outbreaks, appears to require at least 60 to 70 percent of the population becoming immune.

As of November 30, 2020, COVID-19 remains rampant and is moving across the United States at an increasing rate. The research for COVID-19 vaccines is a real world experiment across boundaries. Even though vaccines are on the horizon, we must continue to do our part to control it, stay safe, and protect ourselves (and others); we must also pray and ultimately acknowledge science.

**Philippians 4:6** <sup>6</sup> "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (*Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB)*)

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part II – Rising Above the Rhetoric*

Have you ever been on a long trip? At the beginning, it is always exciting, but there can be stops and delays along the way, and, at some point, you may get bored and tired of the ride and start to ask, “Are we there yet?” Think of the COVID-19 pandemic as a long trip. Imagine that you will eventually reach your destination if you abide by the rules of the road (masks, social distancing, cleanliness, vaccines, therapeutics)—understanding that time, delays, and constraints can vary between communities. After all, you don’t want to run out of “fuel” so close to the destination.

### **The COVID-19 Rhetoric**

How do we move beyond the rhetoric about COVID-19 toward a true understanding? First, you must put on your critical and rational thinking skills “hat” and know how to problem-solve. In this case, we don’t know all of the bumps and closures in the road because this is the first time that most of us have been on such a long and trying journey. Critical to this real-world science experiment is that we don’t know exactly when it will end. Researchers can only provide estimates, because key variables in this experiment are impacted by how well people adhere to medical advice across continents.

Now is the time to educate yourself in the areas of the natural world that could impact you and your lifestyle. Even if you think you don’t care about the details of science, you should. After all, the details are very much impacting everyday living, regardless of a person’s socio-economic status.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part II – Rising Above the Rhetoric (Continued)*

Here are some important points to help you move past the rhetoric associated with the COVID-19 pandemic:

*Risks Associated with Viral Infections.* Understand and stay updated on the risks associated with COVID-19. These risks are consistently being updated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We should focus on ways to avoid getting infected, including known ways to lower the risk and help stop the spread of the virus. These include things that we can control, including:

- Wearing masks (facial coverings, extended eye coverings);
- Appropriate indoor ventilation (filtration, germ-spread control);
- Cleanliness (handwashing, surfaces);
- Social distancing (indoor and outdoor space between ourselves and others);
- Respect for others (if you feel sick, stay home and get well—and let others do the same) and do your share to protect communities;
- Knowing the symptoms of COVID-19; and
- Testing (get tested if you think you have been exposed, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic).



To lower your risks, always be aware of your surroundings. The key focus should be on droplets in the air that have been exhaled by others, how far they can travel, and how long they can linger in the air and on surfaces in a specific area. Most people do not live in areas where some form of contact can be avoided. If you do visit an area and realize there is no way to decrease your risk of contact with droplets, determine how to move around that area, including making a total exit or diversion. Doing this will lower your risk of contracting COVID-19.

*Vaccines and Therapeutics Watch.* Stay updated on advances in scientific research for COVID-19. In mid-December 2020, Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) reviews and approvals were completed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), including favorable recommendations from the CDC for two vaccines. According to the FDA, EUA authority allows FDA to help strengthen the nation's public health protections against chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) threats by facilitating the availability and use of Medical countermeasures (MCMs) needed during public health emergencies. (Source: FDA.gov)

Even though the two vaccines approved in December 2020 seem to be at least 94% effective, there are still risks, as vaccines are not a cure, but a way to prevent infection. Researchers say that, if you do get infected, the impact will likely be different if you need to go to a hospital. As of December 31, 2020, researchers also do not know whether people who get the vaccine (total treatment duration) and are then exposed to the virus without getting sick can transmit it to others. Although the vaccines have shown promising results, you should continue to keep abreast of developments (new variants, vaccine announcements, etc..) as more data is collected, analyzed and confirmed.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part II – Rising Above the Rhetoric (Continued)*

A key way to avoid unnecessary rhetoric is to listen to credible healthcare providers, professionals, and scientific researchers who tell the truth and do not obscure the facts behind complex words or impenetrable data because of fear or the consequences of telling the truth. This way, there are no hidden agendas and you can hear (or read) what you need to know about the science and take action accordingly.

A good final message is that, as transportation has advanced, a virus can now appear anywhere, and people around the world need to collaborate, strive to minimize risks, learn to provide full disclosure and have faith in God.



**Luke 9:2-4** <sup>2</sup>"And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing. <sup>3</sup>And He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics. <sup>4</sup>And whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city.'" (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part III – Variants, Now What?*

Is church a static or dynamic way of thinking? It seems like a simple question, but it is based on your understanding of what church is. Let's use the same question and apply it to science. Is science a static or dynamic way of thinking? Ponder your thoughts.

Some say that biological and chemical processes have not changed since creation, and this is true for our basic understanding of how biotic and abiotic factors interact across the world. However, as people reject, misunderstand, misuse, and ignore scientific concepts, you cannot stick with a static way of thinking about science: you need to keep an open mind and accept the dynamic impact of outside elements that can, in some cases, overwhelm the people who are trying to abide by the key concepts and processes of science. This is a good way to approach and understand the variants associated with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, more commonly known by the disease it causes, COVID-19.



## Origins

### **What is a COVID-19 Variant?**

Variants are common among viruses, and it is not surprising that various strains of the COVID-19 virus are appearing across the world. But what, exactly, is a variant? According to researchers at the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a variant can be described thus:

When a virus replicates or makes copies of itself, it sometimes changes a little bit. These changes are called “mutations.” A virus with one or more new mutations is referred to as a “variant” of the original virus. The more viruses circulate and spread—the more times they make copies of themselves—the more opportunities there are for change. These changes can occasionally result in a virus variant that is better adapted to its environment than the original virus, and some mutations can lead to changes in a virus's characteristics, such as altered transmission (for example, it may spread more easily) or severity (for example, it may cause more severe disease) (Sources: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [WHO.int](https://www.who.int)). This is a general definition to help demystify the term “variant” as it pertains to the discussions and news about COVID-19.

Researchers are not surprised by these variants, considering how many infections there have been, but they are on high alert to track them. Viruses, such as COVID-19, constantly change through mutation, and new variants of any virus are expected to occur over time. Sometimes, new variants emerge and just disappear. Other times, new variants emerge and start infecting people. Basically, viruses mutate as they infect hosts, and infecting hosts is what viruses do.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part III – Variants, Now What? (Continued)*

### **What is the impact on us being able to get back to normal?**

Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been documented during this pandemic, and they are key factors in the path to getting back to some form of normality. As of January 31, 2021, researchers at the CDC are tracking at least three COVID-19 variants that are circulating globally:

- B.1.1.7 – United Kingdom (and more than 46 other countries)
- B.1.1.351 – South Africa (and more than 19 other countries)
- P.1 – Brazil (and more than four other countries)

### Key things to consider about these COVID-19 variants include the following:

- Increased transmissibility (before or after vaccination) – the variant may be more contagious, spread further, and more dominate. Just by it being more transmissible, it may turn out to be more lethal.
- Increased disease burden (more difficult during the point of serious disease) and more severe symptoms.
- Continued testing and studies to determine the impact on vaccines and therapeutics.
- Increased stress on healthcare systems.
- Continued review and emphasis on the importance of wearing masks (layered, medical grade, etc.), washing hands, and social distancing.
- Genomic surveillance (genetic sequencing to find variants early.)

These are the key factors that health officials need to understand and address in order to mitigate the spread of the variants associated with COVID-19 as the infections "run wild." Nevertheless, the basics still apply, and the focus remains on trying to stop the spread. Individuals need to re-dedicate and double their efforts to help stop the variants as they emerge. From reducing the time spent in areas where one can be exposed to wearing a face covering (including proper fit, type, etc.), we must continue with the same precautions and become more aware.

Travel across continents also increases the probability of the virus (and variants) infecting more people, which may lead to new variants. This is why we see lockdowns, vaccine priorities and travel restrictions occurring: to lower the rates of infection and the likelihood of new variants.



## Practices

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part III – Variants, Now What? (Continued)*

### Will the vaccines work on new variants?

What if the vaccines do not work against the virus variants? Studies are being conducted to determine whether the antibodies produced by taking the currently approved mRNA platform vaccines remain effective against new variants. Science once again leads the way and the approved vaccines can also be enhanced (modified/re-tooled, booster shot options, etc...) to deal with the new variants if necessary.

Research and data collection are key to tracking these new variants, so the key thing to watch, as we continue this real world science experiment, is the spread of the infection and the data produced by truthful "full disclosure" research studies. These will help determine next steps and associated decisions during this pandemic. (Source: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)).

As of January 31, 2021, public health officials continue to track COVID-19 and study the new variants and their associated impacts. So we need to continue to trust God, understand (and follow) science and be on high alert for additional practices to help control the spread of COVID-19 and new variants.



**Ecclesiastes 12:11-12** <sup>11</sup>"The words of the wise are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd. <sup>12</sup>But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive study is wearying to the body." (Source: *Bible – New American Standard (NASB)*)

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part IV - Should I get the Vaccine?*

Who should you rely on when making a decision? Does it matter if a decision is simple or complex? If you make a decision and things go in a direction you didn't expect, do you beat yourself up, regret the decision you made, and try to go back to your previous state of being? Or do you seek forgiveness, look for ways to self-correct and then move forward?

These are great questions, and any way you look at it, decisions are something we will always have to deal with during this *journey*. As we are exposed to more complex ways of living, through research and people from many academic disciplines, we learn ways to streamline our new decisions and ponder the old ones that were made based on an earlier understanding; this is a key part of doing your own research and a key stage in the process of “waking up” over the years. You have to learn, move on, and use past experiences to understand new ways of thinking, and you need to use this same approach when it comes to research on the vaccines that are currently approved under the FDA's emergency use authorization (EUA).

## Journey



**Now that the vaccines have a scheduled release, should I plan to roll up my sleeve and get one of them?**

Getting a vaccine has always been a personal choice, although it is often required by various entities in order to receive services from them, such as attending schools. Nevertheless, when thinking about vaccines, you should think about how to maintain a low risk for contracting an infection that leads to severe disease and complications. Think of it just as you would any other risk in society; we take risks all the time, and we tend to be clearly aware of them (driving a car, flying, snowboarding, cycling, etc.), but we balance them against their benefits. We should do the same here, also considering any mandates and the risk of virus variants that can run rampant across borders.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part IV - Should I get the Vaccine? (Continued)*

One way to help you make a decision on getting the vaccine is to make a realistic and credible list of pros and cons.

Here's a typical pros/cons list that a member used to aid in making a vaccine decision, once the phases have been broadened.

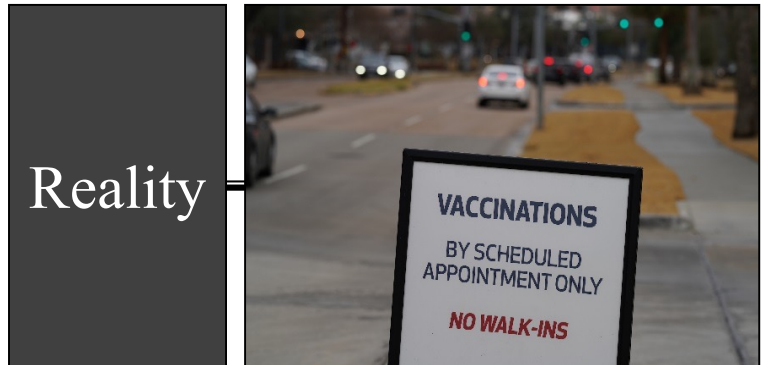
### Why I should...Pros...

- The current FDA-approved (through EUA) Nucleic Acid (*mRNA*) platform vaccines show a level of efficacy of at least 94% (as of 2/28/2021). Researchers are also evaluating additional vaccines platforms (*Adenovirus Vector; Recombinant Protein and Adjuvant*) for next steps.
- They provide a way to reduce the risk of getting seriously ill from contracting COVID-19 (Source: CDC.gov and NIH.gov as of 2/28/2021).
- I can continue to do my part to help reach vaccine-induced herd immunity, so we can all get back to some form of normality.
- I can review publicly available comorbidity lists to be aware of new breakthroughs.
- I can check for allergic reactions because of the peer reviewed research data.
- There are positive recommendations from key scientific advisors (scientists, doctors, etc.) who have spoken the truth with full disclosure for the last 15 years, regardless of the consequences.
- What additional alternatives are there, as variants are becoming more prevalent? Researchers are continually reviewing variants and providing daily updates. As new variants are discovered, vaccine booster shots are options (variant-specific, standard vaccine, combined, etc.), but I need to start the process.
- I can trust in God to give me a focused understanding and to order my steps, which includes prompting me to review the pertinent information that I need before and after getting the vaccine.

### Why I should not...Cons...

- I don't like shots.
- I don't want to just follow the leader and people who appear to be going with the flow.
- As a person of color, I am not sure if I trust the vaccine and what it may do to me. Not enough time has passed since they started the research on humans with the specific vaccines for COVID-19. I was thinking of waiting and seeing what happens with the variants and vaccines.

Weigh your pros and cons clearly to help you make a decision on what to do. The final decision should be based on credible and realistic benefits and risks, and your pros should always outweigh your cons.



Reality

<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*

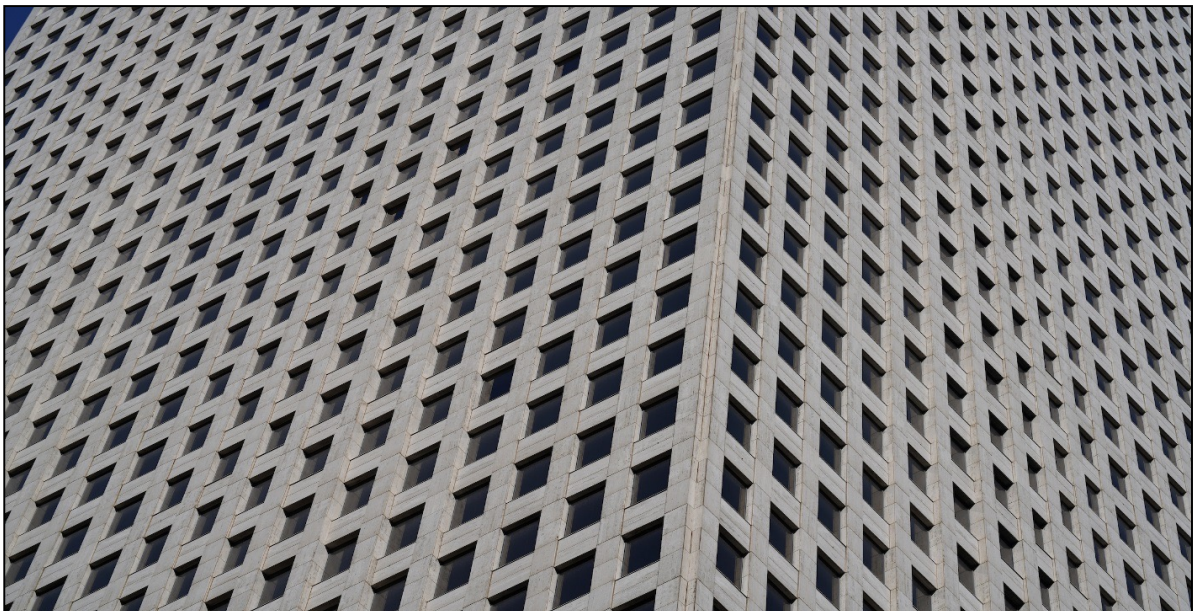
## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part IV - Should I get the Vaccine? (Continued)*

### **Vaccines, a continuous research study**

Don't think that the technology behind the two mRNA platform vaccines (approved under EUA in December 2020) was developed in only a year. Think of the concepts behind these vaccines and compare them to how manufacturers build new cars as the years progress. They don't throw away the basic concepts and lessons learned or avoid other people's ideas, starting from scratch on basic problems like fuel usage and how energy is used to power a car. Yes, advances occur, new colors and materials are developed, and improvements are made as manufacturers continually strive to create designs that will work better for the buyer, society, and the environment, but they still use the proven, baseline concepts and build on them with innovations that can be safely added with much less research and testing. Why would producing vaccines be any different? Why would researchers ignore basic, proven, trusted scientific concepts and processes and start from scratch? Just because you didn't hear about the research that was going on for years to develop the vaccine platforms, doesn't mean that researchers started from scratch to develop these new vaccines.

COVID-19 is a pathogen that infects in a way that researchers are trying to block with the vaccines. It is true that researchers don't have 10–20 years of proven research data with this specific virus so they can understand all aspects of what occurs after someone gets the vaccine, whether they are exposed, never exposed, infected, or even develop serious illness. However, researchers do have years of research working with vaccine concepts, vaccine technologies, scientific hypotheses, and making decisions on the best ways to safeguard people's lives.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part IV - Should I get the Vaccine? (Continued)*

Yes, this may be the first time that mRNA technology is being used for this type of pathogen, but now is not the time for archaic mindsets (or funding agencies) to question and resist new ideas for fighting viruses because there is little choice. Sometimes, the status quo is not good, and thinking outside the box with a research-based approach can get the job done. Like so much else, directing funding, focusing energy, and collaboration by credible researchers can develop the best ideas to meet a need—in this case, to reach vaccine-induced herd immunity. This includes setting personalities, titles, party affiliations, and institutions aside so science can drive the result and provide objectivity as the data is reviewed.

Researchers are still tracking side-effects and being very transparent about the data. They are also evaluating the additional vaccines that have either applied for EUA or in clinical trials in order to apply for EUA. When it is your turn to make a vaccination decision, remember to talk to your medical professionals to help you decide. This discussion should include any known allergies (peanuts, medications, etc.) to help you make a final decision. If you do decide to take the vaccine, healthcare providers are taking precautions by ensuring that you don't leave right after getting the shot, so they can watch for any reactions and provide immediate support if any adverse reactions occur.

Just remember, vaccines are not a cure, but a way to protect you from becoming severely ill (and having to be hospitalized) or dying should COVID-19 enter the "cell" and continue to wreak havoc on body systems. The goal is to prime the immune system to keep us from getting severe disease or dying. So, the decision is yours, but do your research in order to make a decision you can live with—one that will not give you second thoughts—so you can move forward with your life. If you do decide to get the vaccine, trust God to help you to continue making decisions as each roadblock or impact appears during this COVID-19 pandemic.

## Understanding the Impacts of Scientific Research

**Acts 27:11-12** <sup>11</sup>"But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain of the ship than by what was being said by Paul. <sup>12</sup>The harbor was not suitable for wintering, so the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter *there*." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part V - Therapeutics and the COVID-19 "Season" of your Journey*

Have you ever visited a wildlife park or refuge site where alligators are in – or not in – a controlled habitat within a larger ecosystem? There is a reason they put safety measures (rails, fences, signs, monitored trail areas, etc.) around such habitats, even though you can literally touch the wild animals. The animals can typically be viewed safely because the park personnel (rangers, researchers, guides) are trained to help visitors learn and understand them safely – would you want to go into an uncontrolled habitat and touch these predators without having a basic level of protection or guidance regarding the dangers? This may be an interesting introduction, but what do wild animals have to do with therapeutics, COVID-19, and the fight against infection by the virus? Everything.

Let's use this same scenario, but switch the alligator habitat to COVID-19 "viral load" areas. Wearing a mask, social distancing, cleanliness, getting vaccinated, and avoiding large crowds are now analogous to being in an area with wild animals and being required to follow research-based rules and the guidance of the site personnel to stay safe. Which would you prefer, to stay safe or not? It's all about the levels of risks, the impacts of those risks, and what might happen if you contract COVID-19 – or get bitten by an alligator. In either case, you would need treatment (therapeutic options) to aid in your healing, especially if something unexpected occurs and a system, organ, tissue, or cellular component is impacted.



### What are therapeutics and how can they be beneficial for COVID-19?

What are therapeutics? Merriam-Webster defines therapeutics as "of or relating to the treatment of disease or disorders by remedial agents or methods; having a beneficial effect on the body or mind; producing a useful or favorable result or effect." It is a straightforward definition and readily understood by most, but how, where, and when does it apply to COVID-19?

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part V - Therapeutics and the COVID-19 "Season" of your Journey (Continued)*

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have summarized the data on therapeutics across many clinical trials in order to determine the effective treatment options, and they have established the COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel, which constantly reviews the most recent clinical data to provide up-to-date treatment recommendations for clinicians who are caring for patients with COVID-19.

According to researchers, two main processes are thought to drive the pathogenesis of COVID-19:

- *Early in the course of the infection, the disease is primarily driven by replication of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).*
- *Later in the course of infection, the disease is driven by an exaggerated immune/inflammatory response to the virus that leads to tissue damage.*

Based on this understanding – as of March 31, 2021 – it is anticipated that antiviral therapies would have the greatest effect early in the course of the disease, while immunosuppressive/anti-inflammatory therapies are likely to be more beneficial in the later stages (Source: NIH.gov).

Several states have started to broaden vaccine eligibility to younger age groups in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19. If you have a vaccine that has a high effectiveness rate, does not mean new variants will totally diminish the vaccine. For example, if a vaccine has 94% or even 80% efficacy against the disease, you still vaccinate as many people as you can so you can stop the virus from replicating in a human host, which ultimately stops the spread.



<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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part V - Therapeutics and the COVID-19 "Season" of your Journey (Continued)*

The current FDA's emergency use authorization (EUA) vaccines (mRNA and adenovirus vector platforms) state 100 percent efficacy against severe illness or death, but researchers continue to focus on therapeutics and ways to combat the disease because of emerging variants. Such extra precautions help to stem the illness and prevent long-term impacts on the body's systems if you do happen to get infected and contract the disease. Just keep in mind that SARS-CoV-2 is a virus, not a bacteria, and physicians don't prescribe antibiotics for viral infections, because they don't work – you need specific therapeutics for viral infections.

### **The COVID-19 "season" of your journey, a way to reach new levels of understanding**

The SARS-CoV-2 virus is not going anywhere; it is just being controlled. Researchers continue to review options for the future, which include genomic surveillance of variants in order to make research-based decisions. As governments and authorities are relaxing restrictions and as advanced transportation across continents continues, a good take-home message is that as long as there is a virus anywhere, there is a virus everywhere, and people around the world should continue to collaborate and provide full disclosure, regardless of consequences.

For the church, some traditions are being reviewed, and Christians have a chance to shift priorities and choose options that are more assignment-driven. We see things differently after going through certain experiences. Think about your experiences during the various phases of the current pandemic. Did you get a chance to see yourself in others at each stage? Did you criticize others for what they were going through, or did you try to see how you could improve after what you had experienced? Regardless of past decisions, the constant focus on COVID-19 has changed the mindsets of most of us, making us more aware of the natural world and its impact on us.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*COVID-19 Research-Based Awareness, Part V - Therapeutics and the COVID-19 "Season" of your Journey (Continued)*

Some have wondered how, when Jesus returns, He could be seen or understood by all, since we are oceans apart. It is compelling how COVID-19 has been on everyone's mind across the world, and whether or not you believe that there is a pandemic, you still know about COVID-19 and feel its impacts in a way that is beyond your control. In the same way, when Jesus returns, the entire world will know about it, whether they believe or not. It is curious how a pathogen can be so impactful, receive so much attention, and change so many lives. Perhaps COVID-19 has revealed the depth of your relationship with God – or how far you are from Him.

As of March 31, 2021, we are still in a pandemic, so please continue to be safe, stay strong, and have faith in God as we work together with key organizations to maintain our research-based awareness, provide truthful disclosure, and continue to achieve major milestones.

## Understanding the Impacts of Scientific Research



**2 Timothy 4:1-2** <sup>1</sup>"I solemnly exhort you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup>preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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**

*What is Spiritual Energy? How and When is it Used?*

Is there such a thing as spiritual energy? It seems simple: spiritual energy is what you wake up to every day. What is there to understand? These are valid points, but it is important to understand the true meaning of energy and the sources of energy.

Energy is a well-known concept in the scientific community, and most scientists agree with this definition: *Energy is interchangeable manifestations of a substance that enables something to be moved or changed.* The National Institutes of Health (NIH) provides an example using food (chemical energy). The food we eat contains stored chemical energy. As the bonds between the atoms in food loosen or break (during digestion), a chemical reaction takes place, and new substances are created to serve as fuel for cells. The energy produced from this reaction keeps us warm, maintains equilibrium in our bodies, helps us move, and allows us to grow.

Some would say, this is a great scientific explanation, but I am not a scientist, and what does this have to do with spiritual energy? Everything! Just think about what occurs as you “feed” your spirit and how your spirit accepts “food” to stay in sync with God’s word. You start letting anything be “plated” in front of you and served to your spirit, which consequently leads to unintended impacts during your journey.



<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

*What is Spiritual Energy? How and When is it Used? (Continued)*

### What is Spiritual Energy?

Spiritual energy excludes required health-related items (food, water, vitamins, medications) that alter or change your physical or emotional state. When it comes to spiritual energy, we have to discern by the spirit; we are looking for divine rewards and not temporary fixes. Yes, food gives us physical energy, but spiritual energy comes from knowing that our spirits are attuned with God. Christians should be sending up spiritual blessings and seeking satisfaction that God is pleased with our efforts. Humans might pat us on the back if we have given money to a cause, but God, who sees in secret, rewards us openly. It's nice to get a reward from a person, but getting a reward from God is in another realm. Spiritual energy cannot come from a temporary fix, but can only come from God.

Christians should always strive to keep the spirit in control and strong, which is the reason why food for the spirit is important to keep your "spiritual house" clean and to avoid unwelcome guests. When the spirit of God has found comfort in us, we become better representatives of God. So, strong spiritual energy should be our first and foremost concern.



<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

*What is Spiritual Energy? How and When is it Used? (Continued)*

**A two-fold question: How do we provide food for the spirit? How can anyone have lots of Spiritual Energy during uncertain situations?**

Reading (and/or listening to) God's word and having your own "praise concerts"—listening to spiritually uplifting songs so you can praise God through song—are key ways to provide food for your spirit. In this digital age, several anchored Churches of Christ have sermons, congregational songs, and other online resources to share with others as a way to provide broader impacts across the world. Christians should have a spiritual "food pantry" that you can always reach into to keep your spirit clean and fit. It is important to have variety so you can choose from various options to feed the spirit regardless of the time of day and where you are physically located. Christians must strive to always be in the word and maintain high levels of spiritual energy. We should "feed the spirit" the things that the spirit should consume, but "starve the spirit" of the things that are not of God. If you want your spirit to continue to grow and maintain optimal levels, you have to continue to feed it with food that is compatible with God's word.

For the Christian, the scripture says Jesus came not to be served, but to serve. One of the things that helps Christians during dark or challenging times is to take the focus off self and reach out to serve. Whether visiting someone or reaching out to encourage a family, it is good to be reminded how blessed we are. It provides a purpose, and there is always work to do.

During challenging times, one of the beautiful things to see is that tragedies bring out the best in people. Often, we seem to have little to complain about, but things could be worse for someone else. You may have 20 pairs of shoes, but someone less fortunate may not have any shoes at all. You may be able to sleep at night, be free of pain, and able to eat what you want when you want it, but someone else is struggling with all of these issues. We might consider something to be a minor problem, but to someone else, it could be a catastrophic disruption to their lives and cause lockdown moments. So being involved in ministry efforts and serving others is a major way we can increase spiritual energy to move forward during uncertain times.

**Move Forward**



<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

*What is Spiritual Energy? How and When is it Used? (Continued)*

### When to Use your Spiritual Energy?

As Christians, we must understand what happens when war occurs between the flesh and the spirit and how outside agitators (seen and unseen) may impact our spiritual energy and natural state of being. Here is a real world example that provides a glimpse of such impacts:

Background: A FWCOG member mentioned he was involved in a conversation at a job location. This member exuded a lot of energy that was visible to others. This member listens (using earpieces or car speakers) to church songs and sermons at various points throughout the day, consistently praising God to always strive to be on point. During the conversation, a consultant said to him: “You seem to have a lot of energy. Are you on drugs?” The member responded, “no actually, that is spiritual energy.” The consultant got quiet, but wanted to know more. That’s when the member proceeded to tell the consultant about attending church services every Sunday, following God’s word during this journey, and having a spiritual “food pantry” to keep the spirit fed. The conversation continued around problems that led the consultant to ask specific questions, and the member provided guidance on what they could do to help get their life in order. The moral of this story is you should strive to keep your spiritual energy high and be prepared because you will always have opportunities to help others.

You must continue to provide the right kind of “food” for your spirit. Ultimately, you are what you “eat” and whom you “hang around” with.



Spiritual  
Energy

**Ephesians 6:11-13** <sup>11</sup>“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Frequently Asked Questions to a Christian.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Gary Smith, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Church History Ministry**

### *Novel Approaches for Documenting FWCOG History*

What exactly does history mean? Merriam-Webster defines history as “a chronological record of significant events (such as those affecting a nation or institution) often including an explanation of their causes; or a branch of knowledge that records and explains past events.” An easy definition—history is just yesterday’s events, so what else do I need to know? I didn’t like history in school—and those events happened years ago—so why do I need to understand it? These are valid points to consider; but think about time and experiences. As each moment occurs, history is being created. Even if you were to go back and try to change something that occurred ten minutes ago, you would still be creating history, and that change would create another moment in time.

The main way the Church of Christ uses history to impact everyone is the Bible, which is the ultimate guide to using past experiences to help guide us in understanding God’s plan. Christians need to be cognizant of history and what “kinds of trails” we leave behind. This is especially true as we document the church’s history.



<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*

## Church History Ministry

*Novel Approaches for Documenting FWCOC History (Continued)*

### **How would Anneceia Childers describe the Church History Ministry?**

The church history ministry as described in our narrative of ministries is, *“to keep an accurate historical record of our congregation activities and events”*. For recording the congregation’s yearly activities and special events, it requires knowing the church calendar and recording the events which will be of interests.

Documenting the Fifth Ward Church of Christ congregation’s history started in 1992 at the time a congregation member pictorial directory was being created. Sister Eddie Hightower presented the need to document our congregation’s history to the elders and obtained approval for including history in the picture directory. It required she and Anneceia Childers interviewing several older members from the 1940’s and those that were descendants of early members of our congregation, obtaining pictures from them, and documenting the congregation’s history since the late 1920s. The congregation’s history was updated and included in the 2004 pictorial directory. Beginning in 2006 an annual church calendar has been created and includes some of the previous year’s key event’s pictures.

Since 2006 the church history is recorded in the church calendar and picture and video annual presentations to the church. Knowing the church calendar is key to recording the congregations’ annual history. Creating the calendar involves the ministry leaders submitting their proposed calendar of events for the upcoming year and the elders and minister adding special events to support the upcoming annual theme as determined by the leadership. Key events such as the Houston Area Churches of Christ Campaign of Christ city-wide events, elders’ retirement celebrations, elders and/or deacon’s ordination services, the Mission 2019 at the Houston Food Bank with other congregations, our congregation’s annual give-back events to the Fifth Ward community such as the Day of Good Works, the Thanksgiving dinner meal given to the Fifth Ward Community are the types of events always documented and featured in presentations to the congregation and included in the annual calendars. Although routine events such as Bible classes, church visitation, and ministry monthly meetings are equally important, these events are sometimes not featured in presentations, but most youth events, retreats, evangelism events, etc. are. Documenting the church history requires obtaining pictures and videos from the ministry leaders and those participating in the ministry events. The information received is used to record the church history in an annual presentation at the annual Leadership Vision luncheon presented to the Leadership, Deacons, and Bible Class teachers, and to the congregation at year-end.



<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*

### Church History Ministry

*Novel Approaches for Documenting FWCOC History (Continued)*

#### The FWCOC In-Brief—a Direct Linkage to Church History

The FWCOC In-Brief started from an idea that was presented to church leaders and Brother Gary Smith by Brother Karl Spencer. The idea came to Karl after a sermon presented by Gary as he was working on his master's degree and which mentioned his project—a resource center. Gary said, *“there has to be someone in here that has some insight that could use your talents to get involved, especially with information technology.”* This phrase stuck with Karl and sparked ideas at the intersection of his aptitude and talents that could be used to design a way to enhance resource center efforts.

The In-Brief idea was pondered over a few weeks, and, on September 17, 2013, email correspondence was sent to church leaders as a way to follow-up with Gary. Gary liked the idea and Karl scheduled a meeting to review options in October 2013 to prepare, plan, and discuss with church leaders and set a deadline for the first release: March 31, 2014. The initial launch included a resource center website that allowed ministry posts and email campaigns as reminders to all FWCOC members. One way to look at this is to understand the key “take home” message: you get an idea that you think would help; you allow yourself to be used; and you stand prepared to be organized, professional, and cordial, to strive for excellence, to stay on top of it, and to allow God to work!



<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*

### Church History Ministry

*Novel Approaches for Documenting FWCOC History (Continued)*

Today, the In-Brief includes email communication to all subscribed FWCOC members. As new content is released, the previous In-Brief content is archived on the FWCOC website in the resource center section. This archive is available for anyone to read whenever they would like.

Even though we are in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic and not all physically at the building, the In-Brief continues to move forward with key events from early in 2020 that were documented to capture historical events and to utilize content gathered from such events and ongoing discussions, which are all a part of history. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is itself a key part of history, and the church should detail how this period in time was “trying for some” and “victorious for others.”



**Isaiah 41:22** <sup>22</sup>“Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former *events*, declare what they *were*, That we may consider them and know their outcome.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Church History and In-Brief Resource Center.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Jasper Muckelroy, Anneceia Childers, Eddie Hightower. (Special Highlight for the FWCOC In-Brief Founder and Historian - Gary Smith with support from Karl Spencer)

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Men's Ministry

### *Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part I: Men's Ministry Workshop*

What is a memory? The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines the word “memory” as “the power or process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned and retained especially through associative mechanisms.” That’s a great definition if you are studying, wanting to memorize by rote, or apply knowledge of concepts and topics across disciplines, but what about memories that are created through positive or negative experiences? How do such experiences help us grow? These are good questions to consider, but what do they look like in reality?

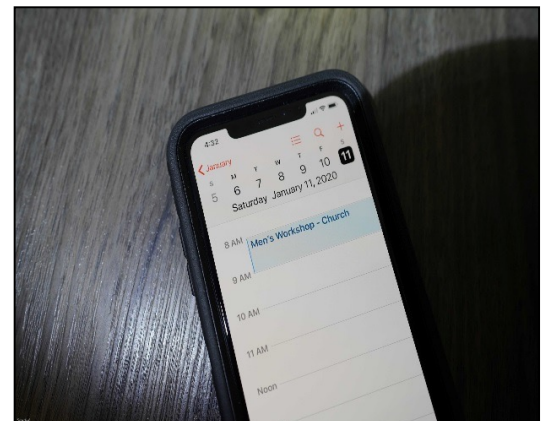
One way to gain insight into how memories impact us is by using a positive experience for instilled thinking. On January 11, 2020, the Men’s Ministry held a session, facilitated by Brother William Hamilton, that focused on ways to encourage men to accept the challenges associated with “being a man.” Breakout session topics ranged from men in society to fatherhood and why men are important in the church and the community. It was very uplifting for brothers to see and understand others’ experiences, and there was great feedback from participants.

As a follow-up to the session, Brother Karl Spencer discussed a series of questions and key points with Brother Hamilton (and his son) as a way of providing relevance to the importance of men, including social statistics (and issues), overall responsibility, and parenting. A summary of this discussion is featured here, below.

### **What is the importance of having Godly men in the church and linked to the community?**

As Christians, our responsibility is to be the light of the world. Others see us, see that we are different and have different schedules, and see the benefit of our actions, so our efforts have to be impactful. If we know our efforts are impactful, then, as we talk with our friends, we pray and hope that they can see that impact. As long as the example is set, they can see the light of the world. For our part, we need to be more open to hearing what others have to say, in order to help them reach their full potential. Most people don’t care about what you know until they know that you care. If we are not caring people, why would anyone want to know anything about our efforts?

One discussion point included statistics related to men and how they are generalized across societal boundaries. Various statistical models indicate that children raised in fatherless homes are more likely to have a range of problems (e.g., incarceration, suicide, and behavioral issues). These statistics tend to place families into categories based on data and research. However, it is important to be aware of what statistics actually are, and not to believe that a statistic is a rule that must apply to everyone, because there is always a way to make a positive impact, especially for Christians. Fathers (and mentors) can make positive changes to combat the stats if they truly understand the situation. It is about being aware that statistics can be changed if you understand what they measure. The key is to get good advice and stay aligned with God.



<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*

## **Men's Ministry**

### *Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part I: Men's Ministry Workshop (Continued)*

Christian men must constantly reject passivity, make sacrifices, and look to God for their great reward. Doing this can be a challenge, especially when society often declares that men aren't important, but if men step up and accept the responsibility of being men, the church will be better and, ultimately, the community will be better. Especially in the Black community, it is very important for us to understand that these are the challenges we are dealing with, and the end will be decided by the effort that we put into it.

**A twofold question: What would you tell youth about the “forks in the road,” and how did you develop your son to work in the church?**

Regardless of what you decide to do, challenges and forks are coming on this journey. The best things you can do are to be prepared and to have an anchor – one that is bigger than yourself. The beautiful thing about being a Christian is that it is not predicated on one person or on individuals in a church building, but on the Bible and the Gospel of Christ. Regardless of any conflicts or decisions (outside or inside of the church), the Bible is always right.

Even if you don't have a biological son, but rather a daughter or grandchild, you can use what you have and seek Godly advice to help you raise them and persevere. Christian men understand that being a parent (or a mentor) includes simple things like going to a sports game to see your kids (or your grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc.). Kids notice when their friends say, “Your parents come to your games, but mine don't have time.” Kids will eventually realize how blessed they were while growing up.



<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*

## Men's Ministry

### *Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part I: Men's Ministry Workshop (Continued)*

One of the things you should do is lead by example. When a child sees his father, grandfather, or mentor doing various things, he can emulate them. It is easy for him to cut the grass if he first sees you cutting the grass. If he sees that you are passionate about working in the church (being involved in a ministry, service, events, etc.), he will develop an understanding of what it means to serve others. If he sees what serving the Lord and others is about, it rubs off and he will get something out of it. Meaningful experiences become memories that help young men growing up.

Some children have never been good at listening to their elders, but most have never failed to imitate them. So, if they see that their father is actively involved in church services, events and in good works, they are more likely to want to be involved themselves. That's not to say that it will always happen, but involvement is key. If this is the lifestyle that you have chosen, be committed and be responsible. At some point, they will receive the epiphany that something different is going on because their household is spiritually connected to God, and they will start to compare households.

## Lead by Example



It is not about children pleasing their parents, but about them gaining the understanding that, if they follow the right path on their own, their parents will automatically be pleased and have great joy in their child's own understanding of serving God. This is evidenced by a firsthand statement from Brother Hamilton's son, who, when he was asked "What is the greatest thing about your dad?" replied, "*His leadership is one of the greatest things. It keeps me going, as he leads by example. He shows me what to do when needed. His leadership inspires me to want to be involved and move forward.*" Brief and concise, but powerful. This is what we should all strive for as Christian men; regardless of whether you have a son, daughter, or grandchildren—or even as a mentor—leading by example is always great!

**Ephesians 6:4** <sup>4</sup>“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Men's Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Herman Brown, William Hamilton.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

*Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part II: Seasoned Saints Serving at the University of Houston (UH) Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon*

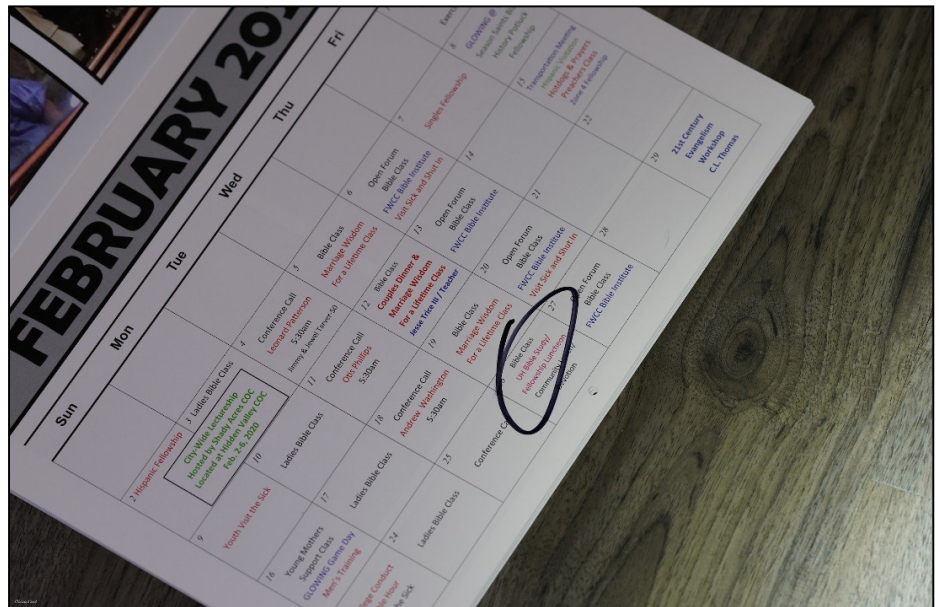
Why is it important for those who have "seasons of experiences" to serve and help others and to figure out ways to "pass the baton" – regardless of the type of baton, as long as it is positive and provides growth? Do I need to have specific experience to serve? How do I find a way to serve if I am not sure what I can do? Being a part of – or providing additional support to – the Seasoned Saints Ministry is a good way to help address these questions, as the ministry serves others.

### Using a real event for understanding the purpose of the Seasoned Saints Ministry

On February 26, 2020, the Seasoned Saints Ministry held a key event, the *UH Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon*. Brother Karl Spencer attended the luncheon to provide additional insights into the ministry. He observed various discussions among volunteers and students, and reviewed highlights of the event with Brother Ray Wilkerson. The capstone of the discussions with Brother Wilkerson began with a series of key questions, which led to an overall understanding of the event and how it impacted everyone – both volunteers and students.

The purpose of the Seasoned Saints Ministry is to *minister to the spiritual, physical, and social needs of the senior citizen members of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ*. One way to achieve this purpose is to serve at the Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon at UH. This event is held on the university's campus, typically twice per year. Ministry leaders and coordinators work with the Bible Chair at UH to coordinate the event and organize the logistics for feeding and having rich discussions with the students. While physical food is being fed to the students, spiritual food is also being shared.

In a university setting, with all of the "getting that they get," we want the students to also get an understanding. They can get a college education, get jobs, get money, get food, and get resources, and students are very motivated during these college years, but the one thing that we all need to get is a good understanding of God's word, so we can know what God's will is for our lives. FWCOC volunteers have worked with UH for several years and continue to "plant seeds." Someone else waters those seeds, and God gives increase as individuals continue on their journey.



<http://www.fwcoc.org>

"Changing the World for the better Everyday"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## *Ministry In-Brief*



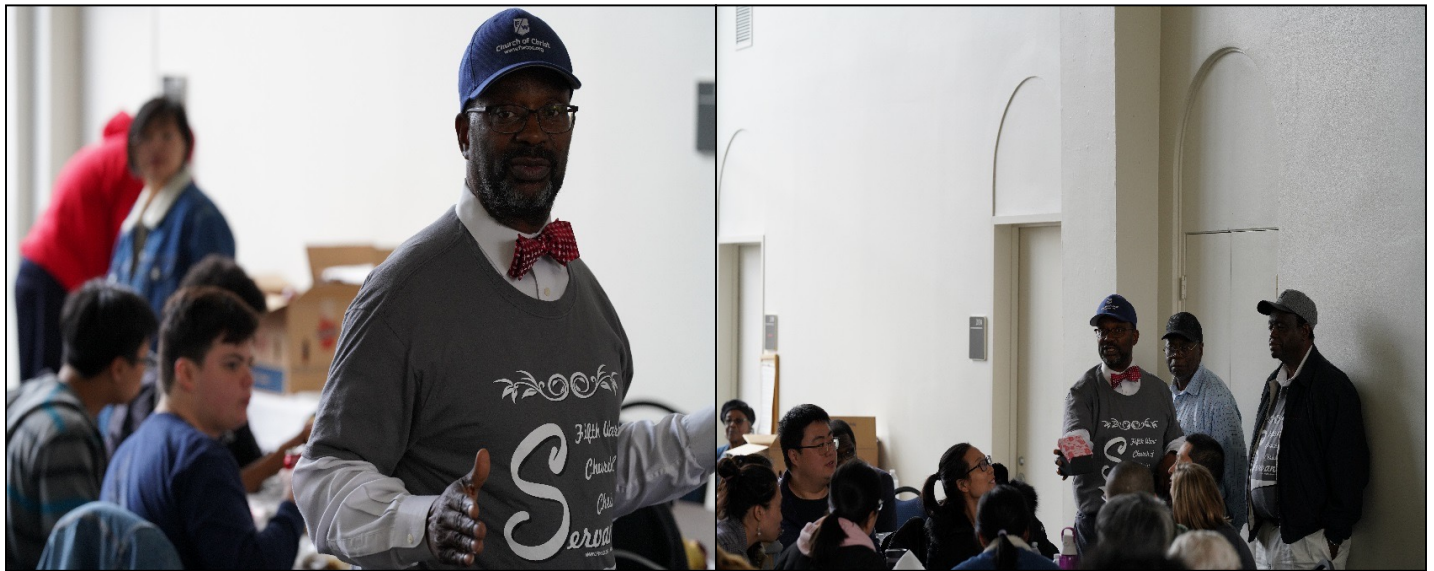
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Seasoned Saints Ministry

*Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part II: Seasoned Saints Serving at the University of Houston (UH) Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon (Continued)*

### **What majors typically attend the event?**

A lot of engineering students attended the luncheon this year, and we have had a good mix of students in the past, including sociology and philosophy majors. There has been a mixture over the years, but it seems to be leaning more toward engineering. We don't typically get a lot of questions, but some of the international students appear to enjoy learning about other religions and getting an understanding of how they relate to their own religious practices. For students who have questions, members of the Seasoned Saints Ministry will sit with them for individual bible study. The idea here is to make an introduction and let them know that the church is alive, well, and available to them. We also typically leave cards and a questionnaire for the students. Some students have even been baptized from these events.



### **What is the most enlightening thing that you have noticed about this event?**

Sometimes, people think that it is all about the people whom we are coming to serve or the people who work the event. The greatest outcome from all of it is knowing that we can work together and support one another in the ministry – people preparing food, handing out water, serving food, meeting the students, and having rich discussions, making it all work beautifully. So, one of the major benefits is to the ministry itself. We are doing what the Lord wants us to do. God told us to go out and serve, and we have been blessed to be a blessing. He created people to be zealous over good works, and we want to have that zeal.

<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*

### Seasoned Saints Ministry

*Experiences as Memories for Instilled Thinking and Outreach, Part II: Seasoned Saints Serving at the University of Houston (UH) Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon (Continued)*

**What would you tell the FWCOC about the Seasoned Saints events?**

If you have not taken the opportunity to visit in a service capacity, such as at the Bible Study/Fellowship Luncheon at UH, that is something you can do to assist the ministry and form a better understanding. We also have other events, such as traveling to museums and historic places. The typical age range starts at 50, to allow you to grow with the Seasoned Saints ministry efforts. Younger people are also invited to be a part of the effort, to help the Seasoned Saints with some of the logistical duties of the events.

**A special note from Brother Karl Spencer:** Although we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is always good to reflect on memorable experiences using authentic visual scenes. Doing this allows us to reach into the mind's eye and look forward to attending events again, once it is safe to do so. The Seasoned Saints event was exhilarating for both volunteers and students. In fact, I think I was more excited than the students to be there. The food (pasta options and salad) was well prepared and plentiful. I truly enjoyed the discussions with the volunteers and students. It was a very memorable experience!



**Ephesians 4:11-12** <sup>11</sup> And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;" (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Seasoned Saints Ministry.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Jasper & Diane Muckelroy, A.W. & Iveria Willis, Artie & Katrina Borders, Helen Benjamin, Vivian Rawls, Corliss Hamilton, Sheeree Wirt-Joseph, Juliette Stephens, Jennie Alexander, and Jimmy & Jewel Tarver.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**Location:** Fifth Ward Church of Christ Resource Center (Visit to UH).

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part I - Personal Accountability and a Real World Link, COVID-19”*

In today’s world, personal accountability and doing all you can to stay healthy and avoid emergency situations are key. You have to know your body, what impacts you during certain seasons, and which pathogens may impact your overall health and wellness.

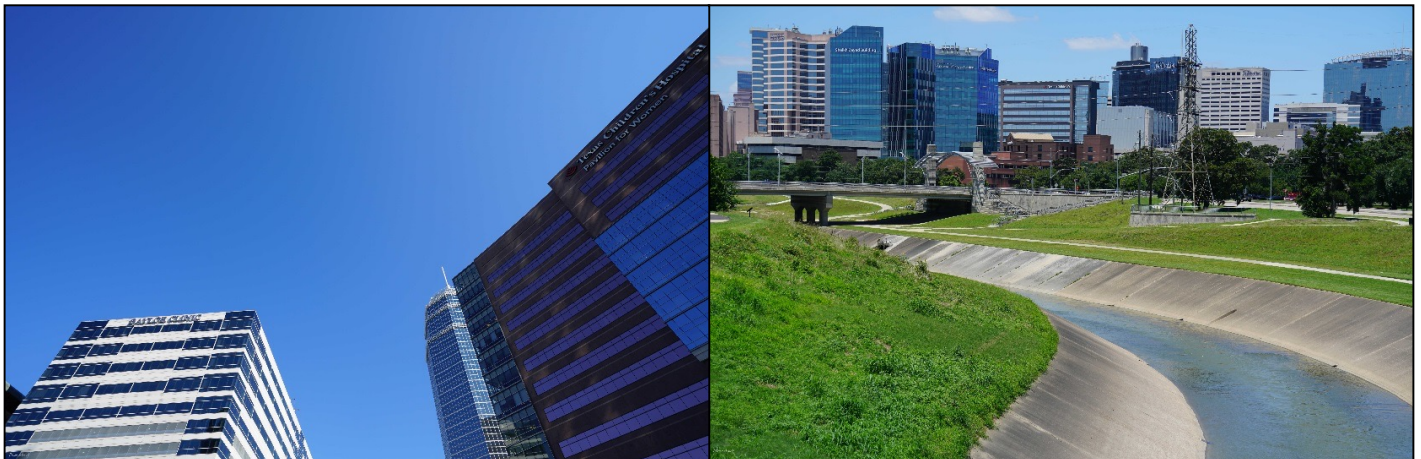
### **Personal Accountability**

What constitutes a reason to visit an emergency room? First, what does the word emergency mean? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, an emergency is defined as: *1: an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action. 2: an urgent need for assistance or relief.* These are great definitions, and emergency is a common term that all people know and understand. Or do they?

Most people see a doctor regularly when they are kids, but as they get older, some may not schedule doctor visits unless they are ill. In some cases, people go to an emergency room because they don’t have a primary care physician and have let their medical condition become a more urgent problem. By the time they get to the emergency room, their condition is poor, and the visit may be expensive. It is important to keep track of your health, and the best way to do that is to visit your doctor regularly to assess and monitor your overall health over time. If a worrisome health problem arises, your doctor will schedule more frequent visits and lab tests to treat your issue before it becomes worse and you end up in the hospital.

If you cannot afford to see a physician, find other ways to take ownership of your health until you figure out a way to schedule a visit. Low-cost or free clinics, and even some pharmacies, are available in most major cities, and their medical staff can perform lab tests based on your medical needs. You can also learn more about specific medical conditions by doing research on the websites run by research hospitals, medical schools or highly rated health clinics. Once you get your test results, you can keep track of your status (using spreadsheet software to compile results, photo captures of results, copies of results etc.). These records are also important if you ever need to visit an emergency room.

An emergency room visit is a personal decision (assuming you come in on your own and not in an emergency vehicle), but you need to understand what will occur. The key here is taking personal responsibility and holding yourself accountable for catching any problems early.



<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



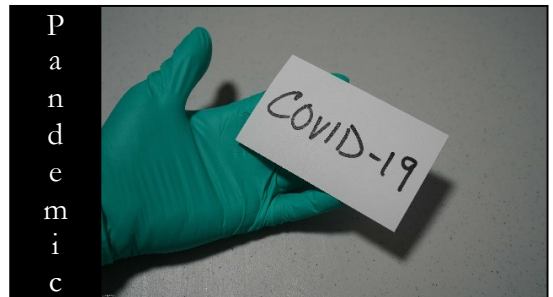
### A Profile of Ministries at Work

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,  
Part I - Personal Accountability and a Real World Link, COVID-19” (Continued)*

### Real World Links and Emergency Room Decisions, COVID-19

Real world events, such as the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, started receiving major attention in the United States in early 2020. Is COVID-19 a reason to freak out and visit the emergency room to be sure you don't have it? Should everyone who thinks they have COVID-19 symptoms go to the emergency room? Should you stay away from the emergency room during these events, regardless of how ill you think you are? These are good questions, but let's demystify COVID-19 to help make informed decisions to stay out of the emergency room.



According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Based on research as of March 31, 2020, COVID-19 spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (including after these droplets land on surfaces), so it's important that you practice respiratory etiquette. The best way to prevent or slow down transmission is to be well informed about COVID-19, the disease it causes, how it spreads, symptoms, and how to protect yourself (sources: CDC.gov; WHO.int). Since COVID-19 is new and much information is still unknown or changing, it is important to stay updated on local and global alerts. It is also crucial to limit your research to credible sources, such as the WHO, CDC, National Institutes of Health (NIH), top-tier clinics (both private and public), and world-renowned higher-education research institutions and medical schools. Volunteers in the Health and Wellness Ministry can also help you with sources to review.

The rapid spread of COVID-19 indicates that we need to be prudent and vigilant about our health and to clearly understand when an emergency room visit is necessary. If you think you have COVID-19, it's important to contact your physician (via phone call, text, web portal message, digital mychart, or telemedicine), who will ascertain whether your symptoms align with COVID-19 disease, or indicate another problem. At this point, your doctor may recommend that you go to the emergency room. If you don't have a physician, you may decide to go to an emergency room because you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and are having major symptoms (as outlined by the guidance of epidemiologists.) However, it is important to be aware of your area's current situation before you go, as your hospital of choice might have adjusted its approach for receiving patients. During a pandemic oftentimes the situation is fluid, so be ready to follow medical professionals' recommendations and directions. You should focus on staying out of the emergency room and maintaining your overall health as best as you can, regardless of what is going on in the world. *(To be continued in "Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room, Part II – Laboratory test results reviewed for next steps and COVID-19 Updates")*

**Jeremiah 33:6,** <sup>6</sup> "Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth." *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Dr Hank Malone, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## **Health and Wellness Ministry**

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,  
Part II - Laboratory Test Results Review for Next Steps and COVID-19 Updates”*

Should we rely completely on healthcare professionals to interpret our laboratory test results using baseline standards? Do we understand laboratory results, or simply accept the results? How can we be students of our own health by studying these test results, and how they may impact our personal encounters? These are valid questions about laboratory screenings; however, we should stop and take a moment to review our direction. Then, we should do what we can to optimize our health and wellness plans based on what can be done safely. Plans should include reviewing required laboratory screenings, prescriptions, and planning for next steps.



### **What do you do when you get laboratory test results?**

During this COVID-19 pandemic, consider allocating time to review your wellness plans, so you can determine if you are up-to-date on laboratory screenings and health checks, or if you have missed any. This is also a good time to take a closer look at your medical history and needs. To help you understand your options related to laboratory test results, let's review a scenario that focuses on a yearly physical examination.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part II - Laboratory Test Results Review for Next Steps and COVID-19 Updates” (Continued)*

It is important to schedule a physical examination and laboratory tests annually, and the steps below are key points to consider.

### Steps in a typical annual physical examination:

Step 1: Expect these common questions from your physician (or nurse or other practitioner performing checks) before the exam: How you are doing, feeling, and are there any associated problems with your health? Is there anything else I should know before your exam is performed? This is when you want to respond and be as accurate as possible, regardless of how small or irrelevant you may think it is. Something small could lead to further questions from your physician.

Step 2: Based on your responses and the physical exam in the first step, the physician will determine which lab tests you need this year and then will typically review your past results (if they have them). Some physicians may try to forgo bloodwork if your results have been the same for at least the last five years. This is when you should step in and request a complete lab order, including bloodwork. Even if your test results have been consistent from year to year, anything could have changed during the most recent year. Also, if you have a family history of specific medical conditions, ask your doctor for additional tests based on this history. If you have questions about other tests, ask your physician during the visit.

Step 3: The last step is preparing for the actual laboratory tests and providing the samples. Try to have your tests completed on the same day as your physical, so you'll get the results shortly afterwards. Once the results are back, request a copy (or download the results from your physician's medical portal). Take time to review the data and discuss your ranges (or schedule a follow-up visit) with your physician to get his or her feedback on the tests.

These three quick steps will help you understand your medical issues, which may reduce your chances of having an emergency medical situation. However, if you do find yourself in the emergency room, you may need another round of tests if your records are not readily available, unless you bring your records with you. Remember, every test done in an emergency room can be ordered by your personal physician in a setting where you can ask questions and do your research.

**Results**



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

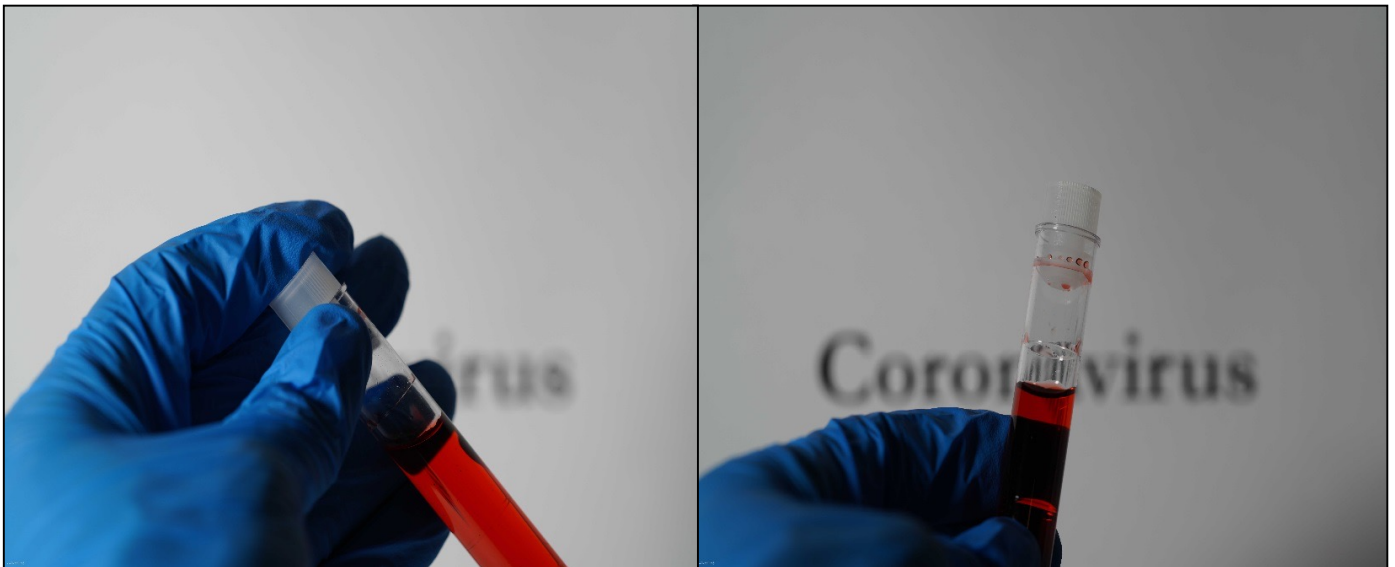
*Part II - Laboratory Test Results Review for Next Steps and COVID-19 Updates” (Continued)*

### The COVID-19 pandemic

In late April 2020, an order was issued for Harris County residents to wear face coverings (over the mouth and nose) while in public (Source: Harriscountytx.gov). The State of Texas also issued an updated plan on next steps for reopening various businesses and institutions and expanding on previous recommendations. Some residents may question why COVID-19 is causing such havoc and whether masks are needed. There have been other airborne viruses, but rules have never been this stringent. So, why now? These are valid points, and we know viruses can make people sick. However, it is important for the average science novice to understand the foundational aspects of a virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a virus is an infectious agent (pathogen, sometimes referred to as a "parasite") that occupies a place near the boundary between the living (biotic-humans, animals, plants) and the nonliving (abiotic-rocks, metals, plastics, processed wood materials) and cannot reproduce by itself.

Viruses are particles much smaller than a bacterial cell and consist of a small genome (DNA or RNA) surrounded by a protein coat. Viruses enter living host cells and hijack the enzymes and materials of the host cells to replicate (make more copies of themselves). Once it infects a cell, a virus can direct the cell components to replicate. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses, but vaccines are, as are some antiviral treatments (Source: CDC.gov).



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*"Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part II - Laboratory Test Results Review for Next Steps and COVID-19 Updates"* (Continued)

You may be asking yourself, "This is an accurate scientific summary, but what does it have to do with me being on lockdown?" First and foremost, to understand the implications of viruses, you have to understand how the human body functions. The flows in the body go through several levels in this order: chemical, cellular, tissue, and organ, leading to a body system (respiratory, integumentary [skin], skeletal, etc.). Systems work together to keep the body in equilibrium (often referred to as "homeostasis").

When a virus enters the body, it must reach a cell to disrupt its function and start to replicate. All the while, the body's immune response is fighting this viral invasion, trying to kill it. Viruses must have a living cell to replicate; thus, the problem.

As of April 2020, there was no known vaccine or proven antiviral treatment for humans, so the focus of trying to control COVID-19 has been on stopping the virus from entering cells, replicating, and causing disruption. If it does enter a cell, the infected person will recover using their body's defense mechanisms, or their systems will start to fail, shut down, and the person may succumb to the disease based on the initial viral invasion. This is why it's important to stop the spread by not allowing the virus to obtain another host and to continue replicating, especially in the case of immune-compromised individuals.

Social distancing and face coverings are used as ways of mitigating the spread (airborne droplets to others and/or surfaces) of the virus to cells in another host and to prevent the virus from replicating. However, these methods have had secondary implications for businesses, institutions, and other places that allow large gatherings, many, or most, of which have had to close (or scale down) during the pandemic. Until treatment options catch up, regions reach herd immunity, or a vaccine is produced, this is the recommended way to control the spread. We should do our part, be knowledgeable, do our research, listen, stay informed—and let God take care of the rest. *(To be continued in "Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room, Part III – Problems Impacting People of Color, Demystified and COVID-19 Updates)*

**Exodus 16:4-5,** <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. <sup>5</sup> On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Dr Hank Malone, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,  
Part III - Problems Impacting People of Color and COVID-19 Updates”*

Should people of color be considered a monolithic group? We often hear that people of color are impacted by specific diseases and conditions, but is this a stereotype? Or is it understandable, considering how people of color have inherited various genes, traits, and food preferences across generations due to various circumstances, through no fault of their own, leading to these conditions? In discussions about these key diseases and conditions, the use of the term "comorbidity" has gained awareness.

### **What is comorbidity, and why is it important to people of color?**

Comorbidity, as defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), describes "two or more disorders or illnesses occurring in the same person. They can occur at the same time or one after the other. Comorbidity also implies interactions between the illnesses that can worsen the course of both. Conditions described as comorbidities are often chronic or long-term conditions. Other names to describe comorbid conditions are coexisting or co-occurring conditions and sometimes also 'multimorbidity' or 'multiple chronic conditions.'"

This is a broad definition, but researchers at the CDC and NIH have noted that the most common comorbidities that impact people of color include diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, smoking-related illnesses, and traumatic events (such as violence and accidents). Some of these can be avoided, while others cannot and must be managed accordingly. As people of color become more educated, live in different areas within a city and gain better access to more advanced approaches in healthcare, everyone needs to understand that "one size fits all" is not an adequate way of categorizing individuals into specific groups based on comorbidities. It is also important to understand that people may have preconceived ideas of what they, or members of a specific group, are experiencing based on data and trends.

**Across  
Boundaries**



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part III - Problems Impacting People of Color and COVID-19 Updates” (Continued)*

Exceptional doctors exclude race and bias from their work; however, some physicians are subjective or have an inherent bias based on a patient's name, age, and/or race. In these cases, people of color may be treated differently when treated by providers of another race. For example, if a physician reviews lab tests and the test values are not within the ideal range or are positive for a specific condition, additional screenings may be postponed. If this happens to you, you should request additional tests to help isolate the problem. You should also ask questions about what other tests can be run to help pinpoint your diagnosis.

Some physicians use a base set of laboratory tests covered by insurance, and they warn that additional tests may not be covered. Others practice using the 80/20 principle, which means that 80% of a patient's medical concerns will be reviewed now, while the remaining 20% fall into the "come back to it" range. If a patient has persistent concerns about a specific condition, and he or she ends up in the emergency room, this is a clear indication that the condition is serious. If your physician is not responding to your concerns about specific problems or laboratory work, find another physician, or ask to see a specialist, so you can get a second opinion about your situation. This will empower you to ask about specific problems and help to resolve your health issues.

Above all, do not stay with a primary care physician who doesn't listen to what you have to say. Similar to a barber or stylist, if a physician makes a mistake (by not understanding or ignoring what you say), then it is time to find another doctor. At the same time, you should check your own biases, to make sure you do not have any preconceived prejudices toward your healthcare professional.

## Choices



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*"Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,  
Part III - Problems Impacting People of Color and COVID-19 Updates" (Continued)*

### **The COVID-19 Pandemic: Relaxing Restrictions, Are we "Done" Yet?**

After April 30, officials in the State of Texas began a phased reopening plan to relax lockdown restrictions. Now, some people are saying, "Why not move forward and just let us get back to 'normal'? I thought they would have a pill or shot that I could get by now, so I can go back to my normal routine and do what I want to do. Yes, I see people wearing masks, but I am not clear on why this impacts me and what I like to do!"

First and foremost, we are still in a pandemic situation. The CDC defines a pandemic as "a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect people and can spread between people sustainably. Because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads worldwide."

It is important to remember that restrictions were put in place to allow everyone (healthcare facilities, educational institutions, businesses, non-profits, and individuals) to be better prepared and organized to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and save lives. As we start to reopen, instead of saying, "let's get back to normal," consider thinking about the word "adapt." Adapting will help you to be more aware of your surroundings, efforts, and routines, allowing you to look for ways to improve or refine your life during this pandemic. This will also allow you to strive for a "natural stabilized state of being" and to be aware that your body includes various systems that can be interrupted if you don't adhere to medical advice about how to control pathogens. Yes, we are in a reopening phase, but nothing has changed with the virus. The virus did not go on lockdown just because we did.



**Face Covering**

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*"Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part III - Problems Impacting People of Color and COVID-19 Updates"* (Continued)

The NIH and CDC recommend that we continue practicing good hygiene, wearing face coverings, and practicing social distancing to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This allows everyone to keep their "speech" droplets to themselves, regardless of being positive (symptomatic or asymptomatic) or negative for COVID-19. Some businesses and institutions are limiting capacity and will not allow visitors to enter their premises without wearing a mask and practicing social distancing; others require social distancing if visitors are not wearing a mask when they enter. These requirements will become more prevalent as lockdown restrictions continue to relax without a vaccine. Again, the virus is still rampant and does not have any boundaries. As of May 31, 2020, there was no proven vaccine available, but researchers are diligently working on a vaccine to stop the virus. They are also reviewing therapeutic options for those people who contract the virus, especially for individuals with comorbidities.

Christians should be vigilant, wise and well-informed about the virus and continue to practice recommended ways to help mitigate its spread. Most important, trust in God to help you navigate through this pandemic. *(To be continued in "Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room, Part IV - Overall Awareness Message for Optimal Health and COVID-19 Updates")*

**James 1:5,** <sup>5</sup>"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." *(Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))*

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Dr Hank Malone, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part IV - Overall Awareness Message for Optimal Health and COVID-19 Updates”*

Who should we listen to when it comes to healthcare advice? Is there any reason we should not listen to well-educated and licensed healthcare professionals? Do we need to review the facts before we act? These are some basic questions, but what do we really need to know from a physician?

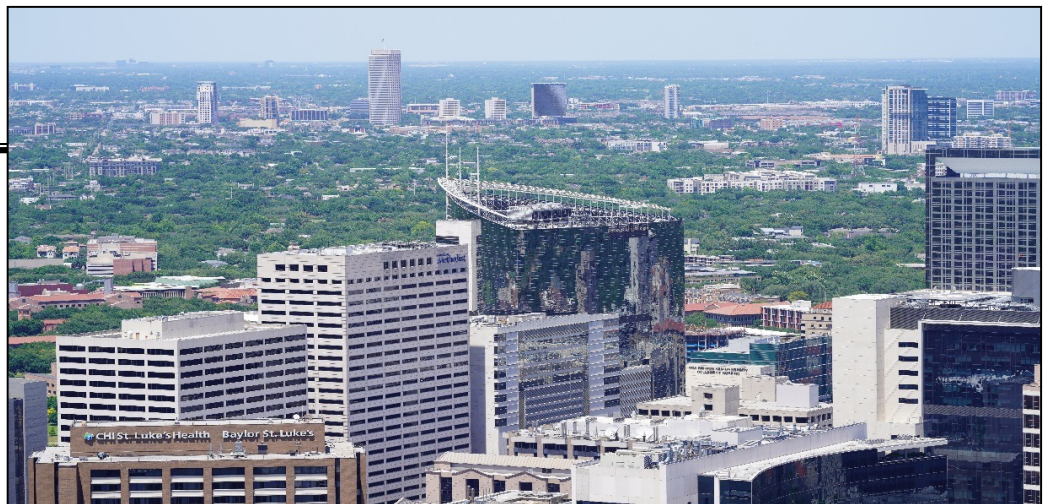
**What would a physician say to church members, visitors, and any interested parties about overall health to avoid emergency room situations?**

The main thing I would tell the church is that you need to be aware of what is going on with your health and be responsible and accountable. To do that, you need to see a physician in order to track your health over time. Not everything is going to cause symptoms. Dialysis is a good example: you can have high blood pressure and not know it, and some people don't know that having high blood pressure can cause problems that lead to dialysis. And, if you are diagnosed with high blood pressure, you should take your medications and not skip the regimen directed by your physician.

Try to find a doctor you can trust or that you like. Not all doctors are good doctors, just like any other profession – find one that you are comfortable with and that you trust. Get information from your physician and explore what is going on with you, specifically.

A lot of people do Web searches and try to treat themselves, or they will go to an emergency room with a list of things that need to be done and say they need them all right then – refusing to leave until they get them done. These are reactionary approaches to healthcare. If you have a regular physician, you will not be in a reactionary state to your health and you can catch things early.

## Healthcare



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*"Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part IV - Overall Awareness Message for Optimal Health and COVID-19 Updates (Continued)"*

Most people don't think they need a doctor until they need a doctor. Basically, you should reshape your mindset. It is best to start having consistent health checks in your 20s. You can always go to free health fairs and get blood pressure and blood sugar levels checked regularly as a starting point, if there are no other options.

Avoid things that are under your control, such as smoking. Even though people know smoking is bad for them, once they get addicted to nicotine, it's over. Smoking and vaping can be included in the same category – smoking was popular at one point in time, and now vaping is popular. People know the effects of smoking, but they start anyway; addiction then takes control, and they can't stop. There is enough information out there, including the warning on the box, but that doesn't stop them. They tend to think it won't happen to them and that they are immune. From a lifestyle standpoint, do what you can to minimize risks, such as not smoking, not drinking, getting regular exercise, and maintaining a balanced diet. In the end, try your best to engage in preventative care as opposed to reactionary care.

### **The COVID-19 Pandemic: Experiencing Endurance**

What is it like to experience endurance for something that is out of your control? Think about the current pandemic situation as an "experiment in real time" that is impacting everyone worldwide (directly or indirectly). The impacts can include being exposed to COVID-19; not being able to do what you want any time you want to do it; retail price changes, such as the limited availability of goods and services; budgetary changes; the inability to attend in-person events; family disruptions; or economic losses. Regardless of how you are being impacted, you need to understand endurance as you experience it, and not just give in and think that because you don't see it, it isn't real. If you don't endure and remain accountable for your own actions, chaos may follow. We live in the United States, where cities, counties, and districts have varying relationships across states, but are ultimately linked to federal rules, standards, and regulations, all of which can change the situation and the status of residents at any time.

On Thursday, June 11, 2020, Harris County announced a new color-coded system to inform residents of the level of risk from COVID-19 and the actions that are recommended to residents. These levels are:

- Level 1: Severe - Stay Home, Work Safe
- Level 2: Significant - Minimize ALL Contacts
- Level 3: Moderate - Stay Vigilant
- Level 4: Minimal - Resume Normal Contacts

On June 19, 2020, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo signed an order "requiring businesses to generate, post, and implement health and safety policies which include, at a minimum, a requirement that workers, customers, or visitors wear face coverings. The order took effect at 12:01 am on June 22, 2020. The order directs all commercial entities providing goods or services to require that all employees or visitors to a business premises wear face coverings in areas that involve any proximity to co-workers or the public."

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

*Part IV - Overall Awareness Message for Optimal Health and COVID-19 Updates (Continued)”*

On June 25-26, 2020, the State of Texas paused the phased reopening of the state including implementing limits on current restrictions, and, on June 26, 2020, the status level for Harris County was changed to Level 1: Severe - Stay Home, Work Safe. As of June 30, 2020 the status level for Harris County remains at Level 1. (Source: HarrisCountyTX.gov)

**Stay Safe**



### Masking Up: True Understanding versus "Just Following Along"

Face coverings are becoming more of a conversation topic throughout society as people try to understand what they need to do during the pandemic, but it should be simple. We need to understand "mask methodology" and not just wear a face covering without understanding the rationale and the importance of doing so. For this reason, we need to review and have a basic understanding of the respiratory system and how COVID-19 spreads.

The respiratory system is composed primarily of the nose, oropharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi, bronchioles, and lungs. The lungs are the foundational organs of the respiratory system, whose most basic function is to facilitate gas (oxygen) exchange from the environment into the bloodstream. We breathe oxygen from the air into our lungs, and we breathe out carbon dioxide. Breathing is essential to life, and oxygen must pass from our lungs into our blood for our tissues and organs to work properly. (Source: NIH.gov)

This is why you may hear requests for the status of personal protective equipment supplies, the number of available or in-use ventilators, and ways to control impacts on the lungs (via steroids, other therapeutics, etc.). If you can't breathe on your own, then a ventilator may be used to meet your body's oxygen needs – this is even before talking about what occurs once the virus impacts other body systems.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Wellness Today: How to Stay out of the Emergency Room,*

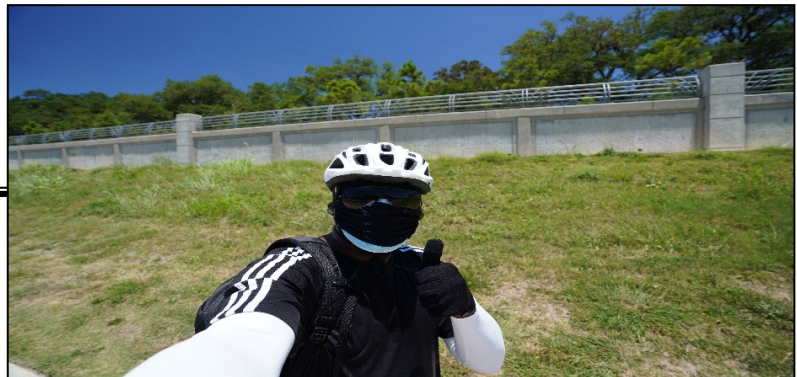
*Part IV - Overall Awareness Message for Optimal Health and COVID-19 Updates (Continued)”*

Since we must breathe out carbon dioxide, the virus can be spread any time we exhale. If everyone wears a mask, the risk is reduced significantly — in both directions — for pre-symptomatic, asymptomatic, and symptomatic individuals, or for anyone who thinks they are safe immediately after a test but who, for example, is exposed to the virus eight hours later through no fault of their own.

Face coverings help stop the emissions from a person as they breathe, thus reducing the amount of virus in the air and limiting the risk of other people becoming infected. This basic understanding of why we should all wear a mask will go a long way to stabilizing the spread of COVID-19. If you do not wear a mask or practice social distancing, but you think that washing your hands will keep you safe, you are missing the main point of how COVID-19 is spread. In the end, it is more about having an abundance of caution, even if you think you have — or do not have — the virus. If this is our focus, we will all strive to keep each other safe.

As of June 30, 2020, there was no proven vaccine and no readily available "one size fits all" therapeutic option for people who contract the virus, so the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend a combination of wearing a face covering, social distancing, and hand washing. These processes work together to keep the risk level down and stop the spread of the virus. Remember, as long as there is a host — human cells — the virus will not simply go away.

## Mask-Up



**Hebrews 12:1-2,** <sup>1</sup>"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley, Dr Hank Malone, Karl Spencer.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*"5K Walk, a Path to Rejuvenation"*

Do we truly understand the benefits of walking? Or do we take walking for granted? The National Institutes of Health (NIH.gov) highlights several benefits of walking: *it's easy to do, requires no special clothes or equipment and it's free.* In addition to these baseline benefits, NIH also mention that walking at a brisk pace may lower your risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.

The 5K Walk is an excellent way to get inspired to start a new exercise program or to renew your commitment to a regular exercise routine based on your physical capabilities.

### Health and Wellness Ministry - 5K Walk, a Path to Rejuvenation

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, walking is defined as "an act or instance of going on foot especially for exercise or pleasure." The 5K walk is an excellent way to experience the term "walking" because it provides an opportunity get out and move, enjoy fellowship with others, and refresh yourself with a feeling of rejuvenation.

#### What are they saying about the 5K Walk?

This year, the weather was great, and participants had a chance to discuss the 5K Walk and interact during key parts of the event. Most mentioned that they had met a lot of new people and were glad that they were able to attend. For most, it was their third or fourth time at the event, and they were more aware than ever of the benefits of walking.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *"5K Walk, a Path to Rejuvenation" (Continued)*

Here are some comments from participants of the 5K Walk Experience:

*"It is my second year participating in the walk. I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to start my New Year's resolution for exercising. I also participate in the Saturday morning exercise class conducted by Bro. Mobley. I feel that the walk allows the 5th Ward community to see our commitment to community involvement as well as the collaboration with other community groups garnered by Bro. Mobley, especially when he conducted the roll call for neighboring community participants."*

*"It is my second year since being baptized, and this was my first event. This opportunity gave me a chance to tell people in the community about the Church and my walk in this faith since becoming a member of the FWCOC."*

*"I participate in the walk every year. Personal wellness is key and the presence in the community fosters awareness. I enjoy the sense of community and fellowship with the members at the beginning of the year, which motivates me to grow in my faith and keep personal wellness at the forefront."*

*"It was my first year in attendance and as a member of the FWCOC, I thought it was very invigorating and gave me the opportunity to get to know FWCOC members."*



Participants in the 5K Walk tend to get into conversations about health problems and the benefits of exercise. They encourage and motivate each other with discussions about the benefits they have experienced from exercise, and they inspire each other with ideas for next steps. Typically, participants stick with walking for a couple of months and the Health and Wellness ministry team is available to motivate and support them to continue some form of regular exercise. Look for our upcoming special topics on health and wellness as we provide valuable information to FWCOC members. Be well!

**Matthew 4:18,** <sup>18</sup> "Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen." (Source: Bible – New American Standard (NASB))

**Ministry:** Health and Wellness.

**Coordinator(s) and/or Volunteer(s):** Leroy Mobley.

**Ministry In-Brief Administrator and Volunteer(s):** Karl Spencer, Yolonda Gaines.

**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*

## Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

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

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.



<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*

### Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

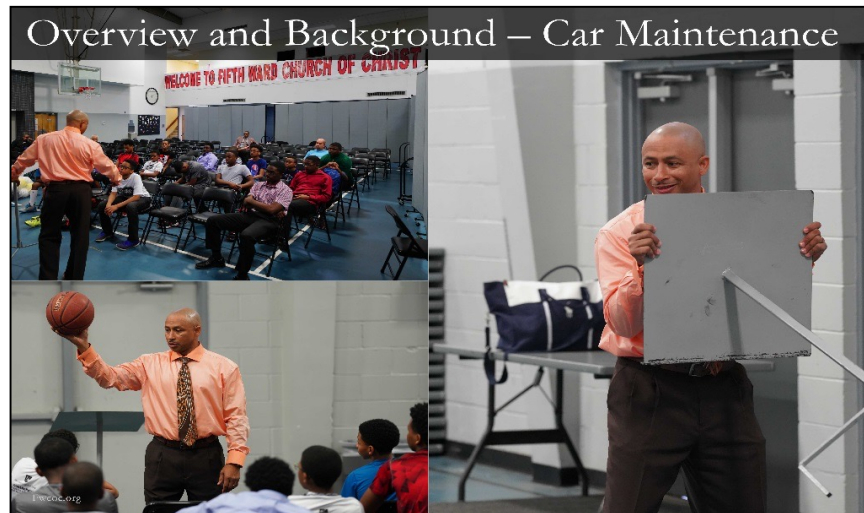
*"Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part I - Foundational Experiences" (Continued)*

#### 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,** <sup>24</sup> "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"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Men Mentoring Men (M&M) Ministry

*"Mentoring: Listening, Eating, Playing Basketball, and Car Maintenance, Part II - Hands-On/Minds-On Experiences"*

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.



### Captive Audience

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 to 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.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

"Changing the World for the better Everyday"

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



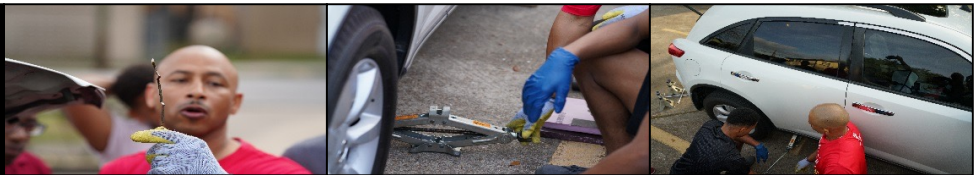
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## 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,** <sup>1</sup>“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):** 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”



# 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?”*

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.



<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

*“Exploring the “Giving Season” Kickoff and the FWCOG 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 FWCOG 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 FWCOG 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,** <sup>4</sup> “For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> 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”



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *‘Blood Pressure - Who, What, When, How and Where - Part I’*

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 - Who, What, When, How and Where - Part I**

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.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Blood Pressure - Who, What, When, How and Where - Part I” (Continued)*

**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,** <sup>16</sup>“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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

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

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.

<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*

## 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,** <sup>12</sup>“But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? <sup>13</sup>Man does not know its value, Nor is it found in the land of the living.” (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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *“Long-Term Nutritional Aspects of a Wellness Plan, Part I”*

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)



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Long-Term Nutritional Aspects of a Wellness Plan, Part I” (Continued)*

### Key Concerns of a Dietitian at the Wellness Center

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,** <sup>29</sup> "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; <sup>30</sup> 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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

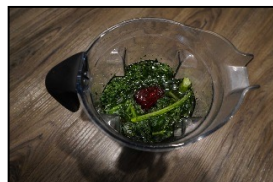
### *“Long-Term Nutritional Aspects of a Wellness Plan, Part II”*

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.



<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

*“Long-Term Nutritional Aspects of a Wellness Plan, Part II” (Continued)*

### 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,**<sup>31</sup> “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.

**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”



# 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 I - Who is the Church for?"*

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.

<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

*“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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *“Developing and Maintaining a Wellness Mindset”*

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.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



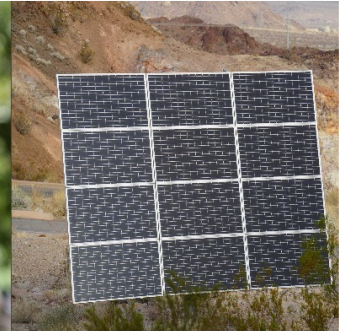
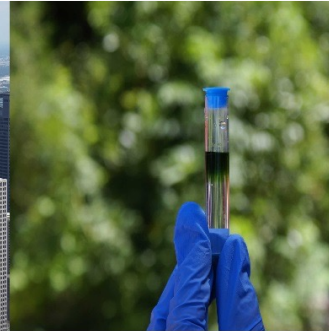
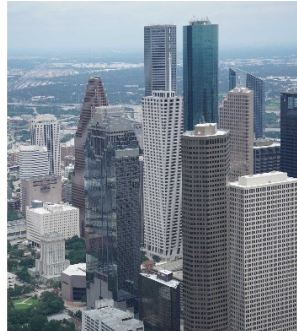
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Employment Ministry

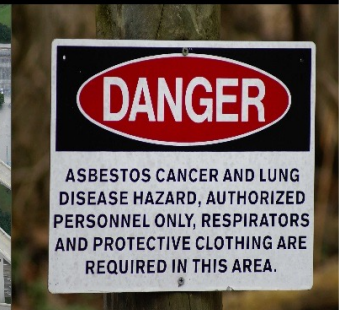
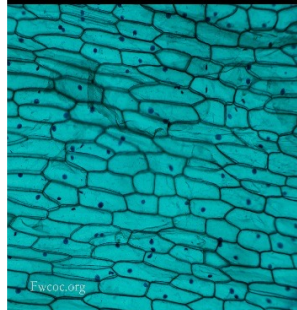
### *“Insights, Part I”*

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.”



*Colossians 3:23-24, “<sup>23</sup>Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, <sup>24</sup>knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”*



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,** “<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, <sup>24</sup> 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.

<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

## 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 FWCOG 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. Mindset. Vision.

#### 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 onboard 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,** <sup>9</sup>“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; <sup>10</sup>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.

<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*

## 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,** <sup>26</sup>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. <sup>27</sup>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"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Men's Ministry

### *"Retreat - Teaching, Mentoring and Fellowship, Part II"*



#### Stewardship

To successfully execute our stewardship requires

- That our stewardship cannot be based on what we think we see in other stewards.
- Stewardship requires personal integrity.
- You do your best because you can.
- Without coercion you do your best.
- Without accusation you do your best.

Focus.org



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 FWCOG 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**, <sup>14</sup> You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

<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*

### 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.”

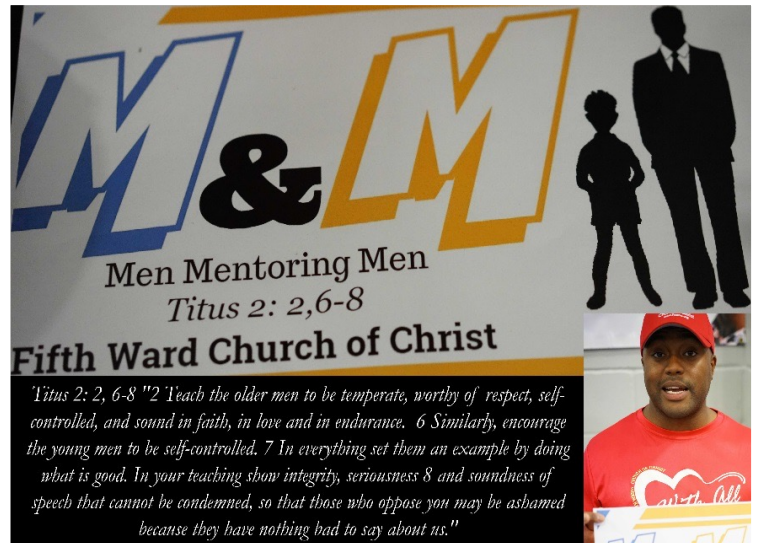
Men Mentoring Men is a ministry for older men to mentor younger men by modeling self-control and dignity, relaying mindsets for integrity, and encouraging soundness in faith through support. From playing basketball and flag football to attending boxing matches, we lead various outings that show men how 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** “<sup>2</sup> Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. <sup>6</sup> Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. <sup>7</sup> In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness <sup>8</sup> 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”



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Bible Hour Ministry

*“Reach. Teach. Instill.”*



### *Impactful*

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”

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



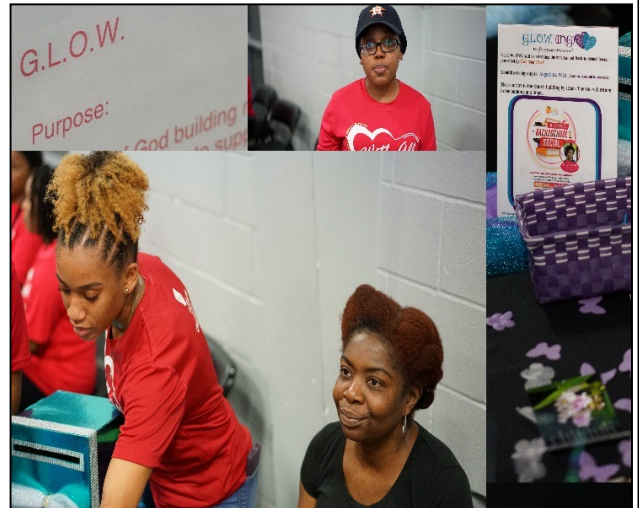
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Glow and Glowing Ministries

### *"Relationships are Key - Mentor, Foster, and Never Forsake"*

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** "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"*



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Education Ministry

### *“Bible Classes - Just Classes or Personal Growth and Professional Development Sessions?”*

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.



### **Main Questions to Demystify the Education Ministry**

(A) *What do members need to know about the Education Ministry? The main point is: a lot of great Bible teaching is going on, facilitated in classes by members who are passionate about their roles. The Ministry encourages learners of all ages to attend Bible Classes. The Ministry also encompasses college-age learners to help them be aware of options for continued growth in God's word.*

(B) *If I have been a church member for 5, 10, 30, or 40+ years, why should I attend Bible Class? Christians who are experienced in this walk can share those experiences and their walks with God to enlighten others. If you have been in the church that long, you will have great experiences to share to make sessions real and relevant.*

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”

# 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 I, Foundational”*

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 heard from us, 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.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



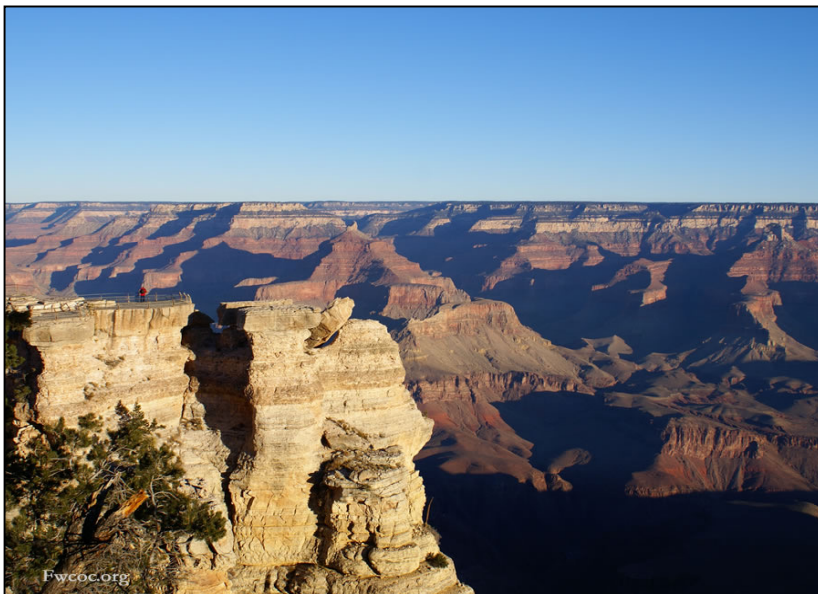
### *A Profile of Ministries at Work*

## Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry

### *“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.

<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

### *"Does God Speak to Us? -- Part III, Moving Beyond Discernment"*

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.



## DISCERNMENT



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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *"5K Walk, Part I -- Get Out and Move!"*

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.

<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*

## Health and Wellness Ministry

### *“5K Walk, Part II -- After the 5K Walk, What's Next?”*

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.

<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 I"*

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."*



Faith

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*

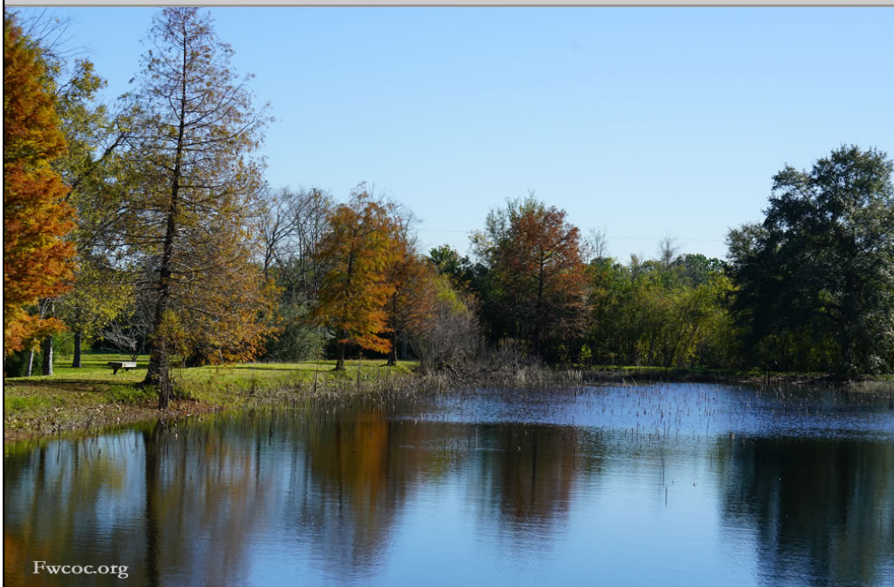
## Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry: *"After the Storm, Now What?, Part II -- Temporary"*

Temporary. What does this term mean? Merriam-Webster defines the word temporary as: *"lasting for a limited time; ex: 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 pins" in the physical body.

### Season, a Temporary State

Hope



Fwcoc.org

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.

<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 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.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief

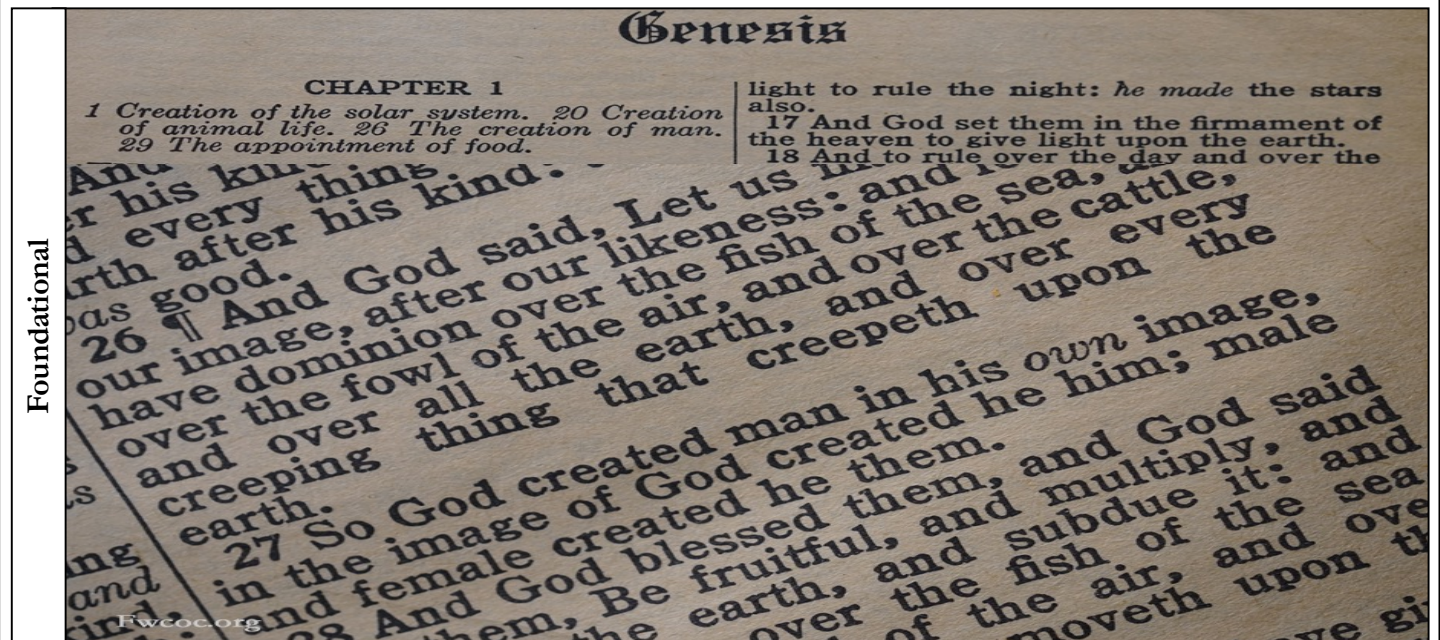


### A Profile of Ministries at Work

## Frequently asked questions to a Christian Ministry:

### *Prove to me that I have a Spirit, Part I*

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.

<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:

#### *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.

Foundational



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.

<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

## 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.

### Wellness Checks



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.

<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

## Occupational Therapy Explored

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))

**Resource Center/Ministry:** Occupational Therapy. **Coordinators and/or Volunteers:** Marcus Pichon and Sharlie Bradley. **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

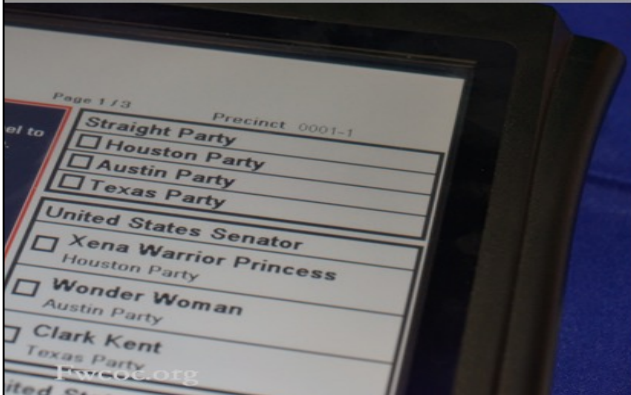


### A Profile of Ministries at Work

## Voting Demystified

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.

Voting



**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))

**Resource Center/Ministry:** Day of Good Works. **Coordinators and/or Volunteers:** Allan Jamail, Adiaha Franklin. **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*

### 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.

Essentials of a Healthy Meal



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"

# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



*A Profile of Ministries at Work*

### The Essentials of a Healthy Meal, Part II

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)

Essentials of a Healthy Meal



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.

<http://www.fwcoc.org>

“Changing the World for the better Everyday”



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief

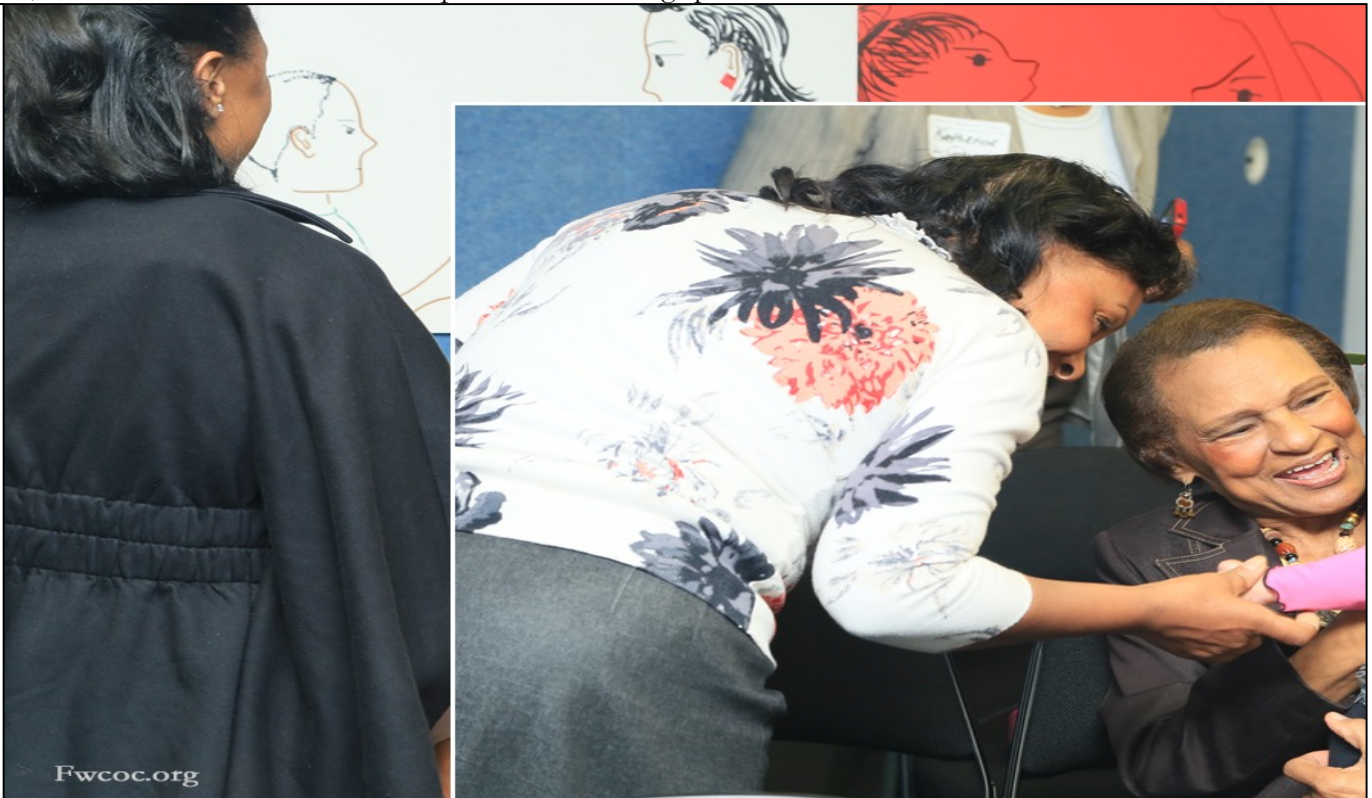


*A Profile of Ministries at Work*

### Mothers Support Group, Parenting a Special Needs Child

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.

A Priceless Resource



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 heart felt 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.

<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*

### 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.

Wellness



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"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief

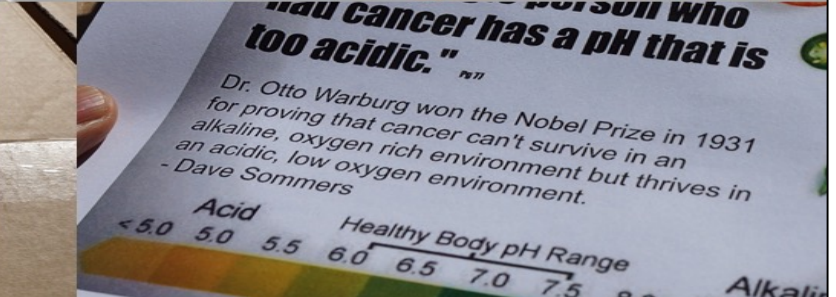


### A Profile of Ministries at Work

## Health and Wellness Ministry, Part II - Wellness Walk

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.

### Cooking for Wellness



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.

<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*

## 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.

From the Garden to the Table



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.

<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*

## 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.

<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*

## Garden of Eden, Part III - From the Garden to the Table

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.

From the Garden to the Table



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.

<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*

## Cooking for Wellness, Part I - Grilling

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** "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.

<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*

### Cooking for Wellness, Part II - Salt vs. Sugar

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.

Salt vs. Sugar



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** "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.

<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*

### Cooking for Wellness, Part III - Healthcare vs. Self-care

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.

Healthcare vs. Self-care,



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.

<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*

## Garden of Eden Work Day, Part I - Natural and Organic

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."



Natural and Organic

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>

"Changing the World for the better Everyday"



# Fifth Ward Church of Christ

## Ministry In-Brief



*A Profile of Ministries at Work*

### Garden of Eden Work Day, Part II - Natural and Organic

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.

Natural and Organic



Researchers state that kale is one of the healthiest vegetables on the planet. It belongs to the same family 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.

<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*

### Garden of Eden Work Day, Part III - Natural and Organic

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.

Natural and Organic



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)

**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>

"Changing the World for the better Everyday"