

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

*But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.—
Malachi 4:2.*

Healing

*“Healing is restoration of wholeness and unity of body, mind, and spirit. Healing ...
involves curing when possible, but embraces more than cure.” (ELCA Social Statement)*

Is it possible to find healing even in the face of incurable illness, devastating loss, or the darkness of emotional suffering? Lowell Palmquist, a member of the Health and Wellness Cabinet, discusses the difference between healing and cure in his contribution this month (see below). Sometimes we confuse the concept of “healing” with “cure”, and as Lowell points out, sometimes curing is not the *goal* of healing.

When we need healing we have experienced separation – some aspects of our being become tangled up in hurt, and we can lose sight of other healing aspects of our life such as God and His agents on earth, us. While medical care is very important to good health, when we realize that healing is not the exclusive domain of the physician or nurse, but is part of the potential of being a member of a faith community, this opens up the possibilities to other sources of healing. The Wholeness Wheel that accompanies this column each month illustrates this well.

A large part of Bethany’s mission is healing. Pastoral staff offer comfort and guidance in times of illness or other challenges. Our Stephen Ministers, Nurses, and Caring Visitors offer skill and companionship through some of life’s difficult journeys, and congregating with each other with our shared faith offers opportunities to restore some balance in our sometimes fragmented lives. See you in church!- JL

What does the Health and Wellness Cabinet hope to do for the people of Bethany?

The members of the Bethany Health & Wellness Cabinet have developed a purpose statement that is based on the teachings of Jesus with an emphasis on healing in body, mind and spirit. We often think of healing primarily from a medical perspective, especially with current diagnostic and treatment capabilities for the body. The importance of mind and spirit tend to get mitigated in our drive for curing where caring, especially in the final phases of life, might be more appropriate and meaningful.

The presentations at Bethany by members of the Cabinet in October focused on the interpretation of the ELCA statement on health: *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*. Included in the statement is this: "Health care and healing are concrete manifestations of God's ongoing care for and redemption of all creation". I invite you to journey with the members of the Cabinet as we explore the meaning of "body, mind and spirit" as it relates to our mental and physical health -- as individuals and as a congregation of believers. – Lowell Palmquist

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