

UNITED
METHODIST
HOMES

*Continuing
a 100-Year Tradition
of Service*

Window

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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

In good spirits. That's the spirit!

Research continues to uncover the health-related benefits of nurturing your spirit and developing a personal spiritual approach to life. Studies increasingly show that religiously and spiritually active persons, for example, exhibit less anxiety and depression. There is further evidence that healthy spiritual practices may help to reduce stress and to positively change immune and pulmonary functions, blood pressure, and heart rate.

What is spirituality? It is thinking about and exploring the deepest aspects of reality, values, morals, and meanings. Some do this by linking spirituality to belief in God, religious participation, or having faith. Others experience spirituality in nature, the arts, or relationships.

Look closely and you will find signs of spirituality every day. Often individuals who express love or joy, who are patient, kind, and gentle, or who show self-control, are taking steps to remain spiritually centered.

Your Spiritual Journey

Building spirituality and staying spiritually fit are life-long journeys. As we age, we enter and exit different developmental stages, which affect our spirit and spirituality. What spiritually moves us at age 20 or 40 may no longer give us meaning, joy, and satisfaction in later years.

As studies frequently suggest, the elder years can be a remarkable time to increase self-understanding and

to deepen self-awareness. They are an opportune stage of life to explore important questions and issues, to discover new skills and talents, and to build personal relationships and social connections.

Nourishing the Spirit

Staying spiritually balanced requires time and needs daily attention. Taking care of yourself and paying attention to your physical health by exercising and by taking time for meals are practices that support your body, mind, and spirit.

Spiritual health also involves the journey within. Reading inspirational literature, journaling, and reading or writing poetry are reliable ways to refresh your inner resources. Integrating rituals such as prayer or meditation into your daily life can deepen your spiritual awareness. Churches, chapels, synagogues, or other religious centers provide supportive spaces to meditate, pray, center yourself, and observe moments of silence.

Spending time outdoors can be uplifting as well. Visits to gardens and other natural settings often power your spirit by providing meditative spaces to enjoy beauty, reflect, walk leisurely, and connect with nature.

Gardening itself is an excellent spiritual practice, providing gardeners constant occasions to actively participate in nature's cycle of birth, death, and renewal. Observing nature take her course offers each person a unique perspective on aging as a natural part of the human lifespan. In the natural world, the changing seasons supply continual opportunities for spiritual awakening and renewal.



Spending time with nature can bring inner peace.



Group activities enhance spiritual awareness.

In later years, a person has a greater freedom to discover his or her artistic and creative potential. Attending or actively participating in indoor or outdoor art, music, and dance activities and events are real opportunities for self-expression and can be helpful pathways to get to know ourselves.

Healing the Spirit

At various points in life, we experience dying, loss, and grief that can significantly bruise our spirituality. During these times, it is important to be open to the fullness of this sorrow. Taking care of yourself and allowing yourself to feel and express your emotions are healthy responses.

Finding meaning in the life and death of a loved one and making it a part of your own life is spiritually healthful. Attending a funeral or memorial service can provide solace



A memorial service provides opportunities for reflection and healing.

and support. Sharing prayers, stories, and memories of the deceased person with others can enable healing and transformation. By opening up to a process of grieving the losses in one's life and letting go, a person is more able to rebalance and find peace of mind.

Engaging in Life Review

The later years can be a useful time to reflect on your life and examine its details. It is the point when a person typically begins an important process called life review. Many find that life story writing offers a helpful review method and a satisfying way to document the joys, successes,

and unique aspects of their lives. These written stories create living histories for others to read and preserve. When shared, they potentially build better bridges of understanding and connection with family members, friends, and others.

Reviewing your life story provides an opportunity to look at your future and embrace new possibilities. Life story writing is also a helpful way to explore what feels unfinished in the past. A person might reflect on past relationships and wish to resolve

relationships that are remembered as discordant. The process can help a person to identify and address areas of spiritual distress caused by unresolved hurts, concerns, anger, and fear. For further spiritual care, a person may find it helpful to discuss such concerns with a clergy member, a mental health or medical professional, or others.

Making Life Repairs

Sooner or later, diminished or conflicted relationships with others do block us from living fully. When relationships need repair, we may find ourselves struggling to regain spiritual stability. On those occasions, taking stock of our lives will be especially helpful. Being honest with yourself, examining any personal walls, letting go of grudges, and allowing yourself to forgive are all important parts of life repair.

One thing to ask yourself is, "Do I need to apologize to someone or straighten out something with another person? Should I consider opening myself up to counseling,

seeking guidance, or asking for advice?" All are appropriate questions and pathways that can help us to remove an impediment in our lives and to begin to mend broken or damaged relationships with others.

From all perspectives, attending to the spirit is essential at any age. It is important to remember that spirituality and healthy aging are works in progress, always in need of ongoing information, attention, time, and commitment. While maintaining spiritual health takes effort, it also brings deep and real benefits to each of us.

United Methodist Homes operates communities where spiritual growth is supported in many ways, including:

- Services of worship, celebration, and remembrance
- Opportunities for prayer and meditation
- Study and discussion of sacred texts
- Rituals for spiritual renewal
- Classes to develop artistic and musical talents
- Recording and sharing of life experience
- Workshops to improve communication and relationship skills
- Discussions about the meaning and spiritual dimensions of life and personal beliefs and values
- Pastoral care during times of transition and stress
- Connections with the beauty of nature

Perpetuating Holistic Care through a Legacy Gift

United Methodist Homes is a pioneer in developing and implementing Plan-tree Continuing Care, a holistic approach that cares for the body, mind, and spirit of residents and staff. This means that residents have more choices in their daily life, and that family members are welcome to be involved in the care of their loved ones.

“Because I want to ensure that dignified care in a supportive community will continue to be available, I have planned a bequest to United Methodist Homes,” says Virginia Ware. “Please join me in supporting United Methodist Homes by planning a legacy gift.”



Leaving a Legacy by Bequest

A bequest to United Methodist Homes through your will may allow you to make a more substantial gift than would be possible during your lifetime. To make a bequest to United Methodist Homes, you should include the following language in your will:

I give, devise, and bequeath (state specifics of bequest here, e.g. 10% of my estate) **to United Methodist Homes, Inc., 580 Long Hill Avenue, Shelton, Connecticut 06484.**

If you prefer, you may make your bequest to a specific service such

as Bishop Wicke Health Center, Hospice Volunteers of Northwest Connecticut, Sharon Health Care Center, or Middlewoods.

Unrestricted bequests give United Methodist Homes (UMH) the flexibility to use funds where they are most needed at the time. If you are considering a bequest with specific restrictions for its use, we encourage you or your attorney to discuss your plans with the development office, to ensure that UMH will be able to meet your intent.

A Legacy Gift That Pays Lifetime Income

Do you realize you can make a gift that may actually increase your income? In exchange for your gift of cash, securities, or other assets, United Methodist Homes Foundation would agree to pay you, or one or two annuitants you name, a fixed amount each year for life. Compare the guaranteed payments below to what you are currently receiving on one of your investments.

Age	Rate of Return
60	5.7%
65	6.0%
70	6.5%
75	7.1%
80	8.0%
85	9.5%
90	11.3%

Rates are also available for a gift annuity making lifetime payments to two annuitants.

If you are still working, you can set up a deferred gift annuity that will begin paying you a lifetime income once you retire. For example, a 60-year-old who gives \$10,000 now could receive 7.7% at age 65 or 10.7% if payments are deferred until age 70.

Name _____

Address _____

2nd Address line _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone number _____

E-mail address _____

Enclosed is my contribution of:

- \$1,000 \$500 \$250
 \$100 \$50 \$35
 Other \$ _____

My gift is:

- in honor of _____
 in memory of _____

Please list my name in the donor report as:

- I prefer to give anonymously.

- I have included United Methodist Homes in my estate plans.

I would like more information about the following gift options, with no obligation on my part:

- Making a gift through my will or a trust
 A gift that will pay me a lifetime income

My date of birth _____
 Spouse or other income recipient's date of birth (if applicable) _____

Return this form to:
Development and Public Relations
United Methodist Homes
580 Long Hill Avenue
Shelton, Connecticut 06484
203-925-4952

A Message from the President

Let me share some news from United Methodist Homes.

In Shelton, ten excited Wesley Heights residents have moved back into their completely renovated apartments that feature all new bathrooms and kitchenettes. Over the next two years, we will renovate the remaining 80 apartments in the building. Meanwhile, we will complete an activity room and sunroom addition, and build a new front entrance and lobby.

Sharon Health Care Center doubled the space used for rehabilitation therapy, and has seen a steady increase in the number of people coming for short-term rehabilitation.

In Memphis, we reopened a building at Foxbridge Assisted Living that has been remodeled to provide dementia care for 24 residents. All five residential buildings on the Foxbridge campus will be fully renovated by early 2008.

We provided training and consultation about implementing Planetree



Foxbridge Assisted Living, Memphis, Tennessee

Continuing Care in seven states and Canada.

Back in Shelton, we launched a Hospice Care Campaign to enhance the accommodations for hospice care at Bishop Wicke Health Center. We will remodel each resident's room so that it will look and feel as much like home as possible, build a bathing spa, and create a living room with a café where residents and families can enjoy meals and snacks. United Methodist Homes Board of Directors has established a \$100,000 Matching

Gift Program that will match increases over prior year giving or gifts to the Hospice Care Campaign from new donors.

All of our activities as an organization are based on a foundation of spirituality. This issue of *Window* explores the dimensions of spirituality in our lives and highlights some approaches to maintaining spiritual balance. May peace be with you.



Rendering of a renovated hospice room at Bishop Wicke Health Center in Shelton



Robert L. Clapp
President and CEO
United Methodist Homes



Continuing a 100-Year Tradition of Service

Senior Care Guidance: Coordination of community-based services for senior adults living at home. Professional care managers assess needs, evaluate options with family members, and arrange services in the home and the community.

Assisted living: In Connecticut: **Crosby Commons** at Wesley Village in Shelton, **Middlewoods of Farmington**, and **Middlewoods of Newington**. In Tennessee: **Foxbridge** in Memphis. Services include meals, activities, transportation, housekeeping, and personal care.

Skilled nursing and rehabilitation: In Connecticut: **Bishop Wicke Health Center** at Wesley Village in Shelton and **Sharon Health Care Center** in Sharon. In Indiana: **Summerfield Health Care Center** in Cloverdale. Short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, and hospice care are offered.

Retirement living: In Connecticut: **Wesley Heights** at Wesley Village in Shelton. Independent living with meals and optional supportive services available.

The Wellness Center at Wesley Village in Shelton: Offering outpatient therapy and specialized fitness programs for seniors.

Hospice Volunteers of Northwest Connecticut: Serving residents of Northwest Connecticut and neighboring New York.

Consulting and management services: **The Long Hill Company**, a wholly-owned subsidiary, manages properties in the Northeast, Florida, and the Midwest.

Would you like to receive periodic updates by email?
If so, please email your current information to umh@umh.org.

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