

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

A WALKING AND WELLNESS CAMPAIGN



Board of Pensions
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Read Luke 24:13 – 49**, the story of the Road to Emmaus. You will be asked to reflect on different dimensions of this story as you walk daily.
- 2 Set your own daily walking distance.** Choose a walking distance that is comfortable for you, and plan to gradually increase it from week to week.
- 3 Week one:** Review week one's guide to physical well-being. As you walk daily, reflect on your physical well-being by contemplating the questions asked in the guide.
- 4 Weeks two – six:** Continue walking daily and use the remaining guides, by week, to reflect on your emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual and vocational well-being.
- 5 Week seven:** During this final week, increase your walking distance and contemplate the dimensions of your well-being in relation to one another. Select a dimension which you feel is in need of balance (and that you are ready to change). Then, create a SMART goal to help you on your wellness journey and make you accountable to your goal.
- 6 Celebrate your progress.** Forgive yourself when you fall short and begin again.
- 7 Live well and balanced as a new creation in Christ.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE ELCA WELLNESS COORDINATOR

The Road to Emmaus reminds us that Christ walks with us throughout our journey. As people of the resurrection, let us live as whole people of God, centered in Christ. This walking and wellness campaign encourages you to reflect, walk, pray and discern how you can focus and center your life in Christ.

The road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13 – 49) tells the story of two disciples who, unknowingly, share their journey with Christ, and experience all dimensions of well-being. They walked together accompanied by Christ (physical well-being). They talked, listened and told the story (emotional well-being). Christ interpreted scripture and taught them (intellectual well-being). Christ stayed with them (social well-being). Christ broke bread with them and their eyes were opened (spiritual wellness). He charged them to be witnesses (vocational well-being).

Jesus took on human brokenness first hand and recognized the disciples still did not understand. He said, *"Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!"* – Luke 24:25

Let us not be "foolish and slow of heart." ELCA health claims reveal the leaders of this church are not well. We

have not heeded the repeated warnings both from society and our church. We are out of shape physically, emotionally and spiritually. We have not treated our bodies as a temple of the Holy Spirit. We have chosen to push, exhaust, stress, over extend, multi-task and control — and not depend on God. We are all guilty and we are all forgiven!

Let us claim the strength that the Holy Spirit has poured out upon each of us in our Baptism. Let us seek, step by step, a centered, balanced life — physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, spiritually and vocationally. Let us claim the love of God through Christ in our lives, and know that Christ walks with us every step of the way.

That it may be well with you,



Tammy Devine, ELCA wellness coordinator



Luke 24:13 – 49

The walk to Emmaus

¹³Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' ¹⁹He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' ²⁵Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened,

and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus appears to his disciples

³⁶While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you — that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

THE WHOLENESS WHEEL



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The Wholeness Wheel reflects our call to care for our whole self. By balancing the interconnected dimensions of well-being, we are able to live well in Christ and pass on our faith.

The Wholeness Wheel illustrates that wellness is multidimensional — made up of the spiritual, vocational, intellectual, emotional, physical and social elements of well-being. Spiritual well-being is intertwined with each dimension of wellness.

At the center of the wheel, we are a new creation through the waters of baptism. Christ lives in us and through us and calls us out to love and serve one another. What does it mean to be a new creation? We have received the gift of grace through Christ, who came that we might have abundant life. Abundant life is living as a new creation, being grounded and centered in Christ and loving our neighbor as ourselves. By keeping Christ at the center we achieve balance. When we're balanced, we're best equipped to do Christ's work in this world.

WEEK 1:

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING



Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. — Luke 24:13 – 16

The story of the road to Emmaus is filled with examples of physical wellness. The two disciples walked seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They broke bread with Jesus. They invited Jesus to stay with them and rest. When you care for your body and your surroundings, you become energized and equipped to nurture relationships with your family, friends, congregations and community.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 What physical activity do you find most enjoyable?
- 2 Are you conscious of the foods you put into your body?
- 3 When you get regular physical activity, do you recognize a change in your cognitive ability, physical stamina and sense of self-worth?
- 4 Does your bedtime routine help you to feel more rested in the morning?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: MOVEMENT PRAYER

To encourage self reflection, try movement prayer. Movement prayer is an easy way to combine physical and spiritual well-being. One example of movement prayer is *Stretch & Pray: A Daily Discipline for Physical and Spiritual Wellness* by Bishop Murray D. Finck of the ELCA Pacifica Synod.

Finck provides a step-by-step guide to 40 stretches to improve physical and spiritual well-being. He incorporates devotional thoughts and Bible verses to jump-start spiritual reflection and prayer during the movements. The *Stretch & Pray* book or DVD is available through Augsburg Fortress Publishers.

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING IS MORE THAN JUST EXERCISE

We all know that regular physical activity improves health. It can strengthen your cardiovascular and respiratory systems, reduce your risk of certain types of cancer, manage your weight and ease depression and stress.

But, physical well-being is more than your level of activity. You also have to account for the food you eat — what and how much you put into your body — and the amount of rest you allow yourself each day.

Diet

What you put into your body plays a role in how you look

and how you feel. Do you eat a balanced diet? Does it include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and dairy products? Remember, all food is good food. Eating well involves balancing nutrition and controlling portion size.

Rest and renewal

Rest and renewal are critical to your physical health. Don't let a demanding schedule cause you to forgo sleep. Take time away from work and honor days off and vacations. Honor the Sabbath for it provides the weekly renewal your spiritual well-being requires.

WEEK 2:

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING



And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel ... Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.' — Luke 24:17 – 23

Without leadership and uncertain about their future, the disciples felt a number of emotions — grief, depression, fear, anger and stress — on their walk to Emmaus. There will be peaks and valleys as you journey toward well-being. How you navigate difficult times can make a significant difference in your ability to be well. The disciples found support in one another, and trusted one another enough to share their feelings. Finding a trusted listener will help you express your emotions in a constructive and healing manner.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 Do you know a person who could be a walking partner who will hold you accountable and be a trusted listener?
- 2 What emotions are pent up inside you?
- 3 How do you mask your pain?
- 4 What keeps you from becoming the person God intends for you to be?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: IGNATIUS' CONTEMPLATION

To encourage self reflection, try Ignatius' contemplation. Through Ignatius' contemplation, you put yourself into the story.

Imagine you are a disciple walking the road to Emmaus. You are barefooted. You are tired. The events of the last few days have filled you with emotion. What are you thinking? What are you feeling? What of the disciples' experience most resonates with you?

LAUGH FOR YOUR WELL-BEING

Laughter, or internal jogging, is one of the best things you can do for your well-being. In addition to stimulating your mind, body and spirit, laughter:

- enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- fires up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure.
- eases digestion and stimulates circulation, which helps reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.
- improves your immune system by preventing negative thoughts from manifesting into chemical reactions that bring more stress into your system and decrease your immunity.
- relieves pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers.
- helps make difficult situations a little bit easier to manage.

WEEK 3:

INTELLECTUAL WELL-BEING



Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.
— Luke 24:25 – 27

As Jesus walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus and interpreted the scriptures which foretold his suffering, death and resurrection, the disciples struggled to believe. We all struggle to live in trust and faith. Intellectual well-being is knowing when to stimulate your mind and when to rest it. Finding balance provides peace.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR INTELLECTUAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 In what ways can you stimulate your mind to new ways of thinking?
- 2 What practices help you slow your mind down at the end of the day?
- 3 What do you know intellectually that you do not believe in your heart?
- 4 What questions do you want to ask God as he walks with you?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: LECTIO DIVINA

To encourage self reflection, try lectio divina. Lectio is Latin for “reading,” and divina is “divine.” Together, they mean “divine reading,” a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures.

In lectio, you enter fully into Scripture to experience it from within; you “chew” on the words, take the verses into yourself, let them stir in the depths within you, and then listen carefully. By cultivating deep silence and listening intently during lectio, you can learn how to listen to God’s message each day with reverence and awe.

STIMULATE AND REST YOUR MIND

As you seek intellectual well-being, it’s important to stimulate as well as rest your mind. Your mind has amazing capabilities, but is often limited by not understanding and believing in your full potential. When you challenge yourself to use neglected portions of your brain, you may discover untapped potential and gain confidence in your ability to try new things.

For example, if numbers or math intimidate you, you may avoid conversations about finances. By identifying that shortcoming, you can begin to seek out resources to help you evolve into a more effective leader.

Look for opportunities to stimulate your mind. Reading, working crossword puzzles, having conversations, trying new technologies (e.g., podcasts), listening to lectures or taking continuing-education classes can all help stimulate your mind and broaden your worldview.

For renewal, your mind needs to rest from the many stimuli that surround you. Some nights, it may be difficult to turn off the mental chatter. Develop bedtime rituals that signal your mind and body that it’s time to slow down and rest. Experiment with different relaxation routines to identify which ones work for you.

WEEK 4:

SOCIAL WELL-BEING



As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. — Luke 24:28 – 29

Along the road to Emmaus, the two disciples shared companionship as they walked and talked together. They demonstrated hospitality as they invited Jesus to stay with them. Community was created as they gathered around the table. Social well-being is about relationships and finding time to interact and play. In community you are able to share and be supported, and exchange expressions of kindness and love for others as Christ loves you.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR SOCIAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 When did you last feel invited or welcomed? When did you last demonstrate hospitality for another?
- 2 When do you feel like you are part of a community?
- 3 When do you nurture your relationships?
- 4 When do you play?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: JOURNALING

To encourage self reflection, try journaling. Journaling is a discipline in which you communicate by writing down your thoughts, reflections and prayers. It's a way to listen to your own internal story-journey by paying attention to your relationship with God.

Write daily, weekly or whenever you chose. Your journal is a tool for seeing things in a different way. Begin by praying for the Spirit's enlightenment. Write quickly, and don't worry about spelling or punctuation. Start writing and keep writing; if you find yourself stopping to think, write what you are thinking.

CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS POSITIVELY IMPACT YOUR HEALTH

According to Mayo Clinic, having close friends and family on whom you can count has far-reaching benefits for your health. A strong social support network can be critical to helping you through the stress of tough times, whether you've had a bad day at work or a year filled with loss or chronic illness.

The positive effects of a support network include:

- **Sense of belonging.** Spending time with people helps ward off loneliness. Whether it's other new moms, dog lovers, fishing buddies or siblings, just knowing

you're not alone can go a long way toward coping with stress.

- **Increased sense of self-worth.** Having people who call you a friend reinforces the idea that you're a good person to be around.
- **Feeling of security.** By reaching out and sharing yourself with others, you have the added security of knowing that if you start to show signs of depression or exhibit unhealthy lifestyle habits, your friends can help alert you to the problem.

WEEK 5:

SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING



When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'
— Luke 24:30 – 32

In the story of the road to Emmaus, Jesus broke bread with the disciples and revealed himself to them. In Holy Communion, you, too receive the ultimate gift of healing — Christ's body and blood given and shed for you. It only requires a believing heart.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 When did your heart last burn within you? When did you last feel the Holy Spirit alive in you?
- 2 What prevents you from seeing God at work in your life?
- 3 When do you feel most connected with God?
- 4 What does it mean to live prayerfully?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: MANTRA MEDITATION

To encourage self reflection, try mantra meditation.

Mantra involves repeating a phrase or thought of God while keeping your mind focused on God. This is a way to center and ground yourself, prepare your mind for a meeting or relax before you go to sleep.

An example might be: "Lord Jesus Christ be present now."

EXPLORE WAYS TO COMMUNE WITH GOD

Being spiritually grounded enables you to find balance in other dimensions of the Wholeness Wheel. Nurturing your relationship with God through daily prayer or devotion is the first step.

To commune with God:

- build rhythms into your daily life that provide opportunities to be in tune with the Spirit
- create a space that invites you into prayer and time of devotion: a room, corner or favorite chair
- find the time of day that provides you with quiet, private time with God
- seek out worship, Bible study, prayer, Holy Communion, art, music and nature
- recognize the presence of God
- take note of creation: the sun's warmth, the cloud formations, the vegetation
- see Christ in one another
- pray spontaneously and intimately with family and loved ones
- hold yourself accountable to God in the presence of another through a prayer partner, spiritual director or friend

WEEK 6:

VOCATIONAL WELL-BEING



You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high. — Luke 24:48 – 49

In the story of the road to Emmaus, Christ empowered the disciples to be witnesses and to receive the Spirit. You receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the waters of baptism. You have been named, claimed, cleansed, forgiven and called to live as a whole person of God and pass on your faith.

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR VOCATIONAL WELL-BEING

While walking this week, reflect on the following questions:

- 1 What gifts do you have and how are you sharing them with the world?
- 2 How have you been a witness to living well at home and at work?
- 3 How can you help a friend or colleague identify her or his gifts?
- 4 How do you balance your work life and home life?

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: EXAMEN OF CONSCIOUSNESS

To encourage self reflection, try examen of consciousness. This prayer form can be a reflection on the day or a prayerful review of life. Its purpose is to sensitize you to God's work in your life. The focus is on God and on letting God show you yourself. The goal is to notice God's presence and actions in our daily life and respond to God's call.

To practice examen:

- 1 Review your day and let your feelings surface.
- 2 Notice when and how God was present in you and others.
- 3 Enter into a conversation with God about your day.

VOCATION IS MORE THAN A JOB

You may think vocation refers only to those called to serve this church as pastor, deaconess, diaconal minister or associate in ministry. However, God may have called you to be a farmer, nurse, teacher, secretary or lawyer.

"Living from the waters of baptism, sharing our gifts into the world, for the sake of the world" is a fuller definition. Your vocation includes the gifts you have been given through the waters of baptism, the passions that lie within you.

Vocation includes many roles, such as parent, spouse, child and sibling. You are called to these roles. Vocation is not just your work from 9 to 5; it's about how God lives through you in each aspect of your life: making faith-filled, ethical decisions, lifestyle choices, modeling and mentoring, and living a Christ-centered life.

You are constantly called, and your vocation evolves as you grow through life experiences, challenges and events.

WEEK 7:

WHERE DO YOU NEED BALANCE?



While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'

— Luke 24:36

Life balance is vital as you seek to be a good steward of your mind, body and spirit. You are called to live a life centered in Christ. Pray for God's guidance as you seek to live a balanced life, living as a whole person of God.

MAP YOUR JOURNEY TO WELL-BEING

- As you walk this week, reflect upon what you learned about your physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual and vocational well-being over the last six weeks.
- Rate your need and readiness for change in each dimension using the chart below.
- Choose a dimension in which you need to make a change to achieve balance. Keep in mind that the dimension in which you most need to change may not be the dimension you are ready to change.
- Create a SMART goal (described on the next page) to get you started on your journey.
- Live prayerfully. Pray for God to motivate and surround you with support as you strive for greater balance. If you fall short, remember that you are forgiven and ask God for strength to begin again.

	Physical	Emotional	Intellectual	Social	Spiritual	Vocational
Doing well — no need for change						
Not ready to make a change						
Thinking about making a change						
Preparing to make a change						
Ready to make a change						

SMART GOALS

To begin making a change in your life, set a goal that is SMART — Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Trackable. Your goal does not have to be large or dramatic. A realistic, achievable baby step is most effective.

When setting your goal, consider inviting someone to be your accountability partner. Ask this person to support you, pray for you and hold you accountable to the change you are making in your life. Celebrate each small accomplishment. Let celebration motivate and sustain you as you make a change for your well-being.

SMART GOAL EXAMPLES

Physical — My SMART goal is to eat more fruits. I will achieve this by buying an apple for each day of the week. I will measure this by counting how many apples are left at the end of the week.

Emotional — My SMART goal is to reduce my stress before my monthly council meetings. I will do this by practicing breathing techniques. I will measure this by my ability to sleep after the meeting.

Intellectual — My SMART goal is to turn off the mental chatter of my day at bedtime. I will do this by reading a chapter in a book each night. I will measure this by how quickly I finish the book and how easily I fall asleep each night.

Social — My SMART goal is to connect with my friends

on a monthly basis. I will do this by setting up a monthly dinner with my friends. I will measure this by tracking the dinners on my calendar and by how much more connected I feel with my friends.

Spiritual — My SMART goal is to make time for daily devotions. I will do this by setting aside time each morning while my coffee is brewing to read from a daily devotional book. I will measure this by how much more grounded I feel throughout the day.

Vocational — My SMART goal is to spend more time with my family. I will do this by reserving each Friday evening as family night. I will measure this by the number of Friday evenings I spend with my family instead of working.

MY SMART GOAL

Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Trackable



Date: _____

My SMART goal: _____

When I want to achieve it: _____

How I'm going to do it: _____

How I'm going to measure it: _____

My accountability partner is: _____

I will celebrate my success by: _____

My accountability partner will support me in this way: _____

Signature: _____