

**Walk  
to  
Wherever,  
Whenever!**



## **Walk to Wherever, Whenever! Information for Program Leaders.**

All documents are available in Word format and may be modified to meet your needs.

Preparation for the Walk:

Step one is to decide where and when you want to walk. Walking to Bethlehem for Christmas or Jerusalem for Easter are possibilities. You could also walk to a sister parish or companion diocese. You could visit a beloved parishioner who has moved away. Consider the distance, the time frame for your walk, and how many people might participate. This program is meant to be run over twelve weeks, but you may want to adapt it to your circumstances. To find distances, go to Yahoo or Google search engine and put "latitude and longitude Bethlehem, Israel," or whatever. For a town, it usually gives you the post office. You can also find many historic buildings. Once you have acquired the latitude and longitude for your start and finish, go to [www.indo.com/distance](http://www.indo.com/distance) or just put "how far is it" into yahoo search. When you enter your latitude and longitude into the blanks, make sure you follow the demonstrated format. It will give you the miles!

Put out an information sheet about three weeks before the walk starts. A sample is included in this kit – sort of a FAQ document. Feel free to adapt it to your walk, or make up your own. If you choose to adapt the form in the kit, it is a Word document and the (...s) clue you to add your own info. Decide what will count. Conversion factors are given for walking, running, biking, and swimming. They were developed from a calorie chart. So, if you want to include things like aerobics class, make an equivalent mileage for that activity. Decide if you will allow stationary bikes, treadmills, and rowing machines.

It is nice to have something to identify participants. Someone in your parish may have a button-making machine and make buttons. If you have the budget to support it, tee shirts are wonderful. You may find an organization to donate pedometers. At least have a ribbon. The walking figure on the top of information page can be copied onto anything that works for your walk. It was designed and donated by Bruce Beattie, a Portland, Oregon artist, whose sister is a parish nurse. You may wish to call this figure a "(St. Paul's) saint" – using the name of your parish.

Mileage cards – It helps to give participants cards on which to record their walking or other exercise. The two sheets included in the kit are meant to be printed on either postcards that come four to a sheet or on card stock that can be cut into four pieces. One sheet prints the front of the cards and the other the back. You can add your destination to the top and your contact information in the boxes on either side of the walking figure.

Suggestions for participant packets: Place each person's materials in a 9x12 envelope. Number them so that each participant has a number. Then have some oversight to the passing out of envelopes so that the program leader has a list of who has which number! If you are doing the full twelve weeks, include each of the 12 readings, 12 mileage cards, and the team identifier (button, ribbon, shirt, etc.). The instruction sheet for figuring and reporting individual miles -included in this kit- can be pasted on the front of the packet. People record their miles by participant number - that way if they had sensitive information on the cards and put them in the collection plate, they were more or less anonymous.

An Excel spreadsheet is an excellent way to keep track of individual and team miles. It can be set up by both name and number. Use whatever record keeping method works best for you. Give participants multiple options for reporting miles: email, snail mail, voice mail, or returning cards to the collection plate on Sundays. Make sure the people who tabulate the collection know what to do with any mileage cards found therein.

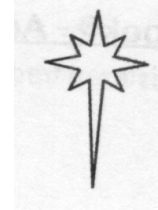
You may be able to obtain a large laminated map (check a school supply store), which can be mounted on a big bulletin board and placed in a prominent location. Each week it can be marked with how far you are on your route. Paste stars at the start and finish. Because it is laminated, it can be wiped clean and used again. You may wish to include information on areas you are walking through in the Sunday bulletin

This kit includes a sample of a weekly progress sheet that can be posted each week. Change the red numbers as needed and also the "we are..." part if you use it. You might also post a list of the participants - just their names and numbers, so if someone wanted to see who was participating they could or they could look up who the weekly champion was. But they can't find out how much - or little - someone else walked. Give the grand champions and runners up - by name or number - recognition in the newsletter and/or in person. If there are extra miles, figure out a side trip to use them up! For instance, if you were walking to Bethlehem for Christmas, send a representative back to Nazareth to get some baby clothes St. Anne had made for her grandson, but hadn't finished yet when Mary and Joseph had to leave!

Have various team events during your walk. It may work to have a weekly team walk in a convenient location. One or two longer hikes with a picnic might be possible. One popular suggestion is a "water stop affair" for participants. Each team member brings a beverage or snack to share at an evening of visiting and getting acquainted. (Yes, there may be beverages other than water.)

# Walk to (Your Destination)

*A Journey of Spiritual Faith and Physical Exercise*



## **What is it?**

(Your destination) is (this many) miles from (name of your) Church. This is the real, as the crow flies mileage. Mary and Joseph walked to Bethlehem for the birth of Christ. Jesus walked to Jerusalem for the crucifixion. (If neither of these applies, use - We are walking to...for...) Of course, (Mary, Joseph, Jesus,) didn't start from (your city), which is why this walk will be a community effort—we will pool our miles. That way, no one has to go terribly far, but hopefully far enough to increase health.

## **What if I hate to walk?**

Well, what do you like to do? We are giving equivalents for running, biking, swimming and rowing. These are also healthful aerobic exercises. So is raking leaves, but we will only be counting traveling miles! If you have an exercise that you feel qualifies, but is not listed here, see (the project leader) for an arbitrary and final decision!

## **Can I sign up my neighbor who is Baptist?**

Of course. The more walkers, the better. The (project leader) has nightmares of nobody signing up and being faced with trying to average (500) miles a week all by (her/him)self! This is a parish health ministry rather than a congregational one. The parish is the community of the church.

## **What do I get?**

Well, hopefully healthier. But also a participant packet which includes a ( whatever you use to indicate participation), ways to track and report your mileage and weekly words to think on and a health tip – both related - sometimes rather loosely - to the spiritual theme of the week. (Plus anything else you think of.)

## **When does it start”**

You may, of course, start walking at any time. However, the miles begin to count on (your starting date). This gives us 12 weeks to complete our journey in time for the (ending event such as the birth or crucifixion of Jesus.) Yes, people can join in mid-walk.

## **How do I sign up?**

You will need to get a participant pack with a participant number, either at (church or at the parish office) The packets will be ready by (about two weeks before the beginning of the walk.) To reserve a participant packet, sign the sheet in the (narthex.)

## **Instruction Sheet**

Each week take a mileage card from the packet.

Read the whole person – body, mind, and spirit – wellness sheet for that week.

Copy the suggested verse, or another that is more meaningful to you, to the space on the card. If you like, carry the card with you when you walk. You may also use the card to record intercessions, thanksgivings, or insights that occur to you while on your journey. Wear your (button, ribbon, tee shirt) while walking.

The back of the card has spaces for you to record how far you walk each day. You may already know the distance of a favorite path. If not, a realistic estimate may be made by marking off a mile on your car's odometer, then walking that distance to get a time equivalent. For instance, if it took you 20 minutes to walk the measured mile, and then you walk at about the same pace for 40 minutes in the woods, or in the mall, or on the beach, you can count 2 miles. Treadmills are also approved.

### **Other approved means of travel:**

Bicycling: Each 2 miles on your bike = 1 mile of walking (May be stationary bike)

Running: The same as walking. If you recall high school physics, work = mass times distance. Running just moves mass faster.

Swimming: Each 10 minutes of active swimming = 1 mile of walking

Rowing: Each 10 minutes of active rowing or canoe paddling = 1 mile of walking (May be rowing machine)

### **To turn in your miles:**

Any of the following will work. (addresses and phone #s on the card)

1. Put the card in the offering plate. Put participant # on card.
2. Mail the card to the parish office. Put participant # on card.
3. Bring the card to the parish office. Put participant # on card.
4. Call the (program leader) to tell him/her or voice mail your mile total for the week and your participant number.
5. Email the (program leader) the same information

But do it EVERY week so that we can accurately reflect on the map how we are doing.

**Enjoy yourself as you care for your physical and spiritual health!!**

## **Week One - Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Basic Beliefs

Our beliefs come to us in varied ways, from childhood Sunday School classes, from life experiences, or the witnessing of others. The beliefs that are the foundation of our lives deserve our deepest thoughts. This week, reflect on a simple statement that underlies your spiritual grounding.

### **A suggested thought:**

*What our Lord requires of us is this – to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. Micah 6:8*

### **For your health:**

Walking is almost always healthy. However, there is one condition that you should be aware of, as this is NOT a case of “walking through” the pain. It is called intermittent claudication. You notice it when you walk. After a certain distance, you feel a distinct pain in your leg. The pain always occurs in the same spot. When you stop and rest a few minutes, the discomfort goes away. This condition may be caused by poor circulation – narrowing of the arteries in the legs. Almost always this predictable, recurring pain, sometimes described as a cramp or a weakness, is a sign that the muscles in your legs aren’t getting enough blood to supply needed oxygen and nutrients.

Your risk of intermittent claudication increases if you:

- ❖ Smoke
- ❖ Are a man
- ❖ Are a woman past menopause
- ❖ Are at least 60 years old
- ❖ Have high blood pressure
- ❖ Have high blood cholesterol
- ❖ Are overweight
- ❖ Are sedentary
- ❖ Have diabetes

Your muscles need more oxygen when you exercise. If circulation to your legs is limited, activities such as walking or climbing stairs cause muscle fatigue, pain or aching. With severe obstruction, you may feel pain even when you are resting. Severe obstruction can lead to sores on your legs or feet that don’t heal.

If you have symptoms suggesting poor circulation in your legs, see your medical practitioner. Exercise is a treatment for intermittent claudication, but only to the point of pain. This is not a pain you should “walk through” to cure. A professional can help you design a walking program that will condition your muscles to use oxygen more efficiently and improve blood flow in the smaller arteries to compensate for arteries that have become narrow.

## **Week Two - Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Health

Health means different things to different people. For some it means absence of disease. For others it may mean the ability to do certain activities. For some it means remaining young. Health, wellness, as viewed by our Walk to (wherever), is broader than mere physical attributes. It encompasses the whole of our being, body, mind, and spirit. It is possible to have health in the presence of disease, old age, or physical weakness. Health is when one is at peace with the path they are currently walking in life. This week, reflect on what health means to you.

**A suggested thought:** *I am come in order that you might have life, and have it more abundantly.* John 10:10

### **For your health:**

Walking has been widely practiced as a recreational and fitness activity throughout recorded history. Classical and early English literature seems to have been written largely by men who were prodigious walkers, and Emerson and Thoreau helped carry on the tradition in America. Walking today is riding a wave of popularity that draws its strength from walking's health-giving qualities.

The fundamental health benefits of walking are many. It helps control weight, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels. Walking is the perfect complement to a sensible diet in order to lose weight and keep it off. Walking helps bones maintain their calcium density. Walking improves cardiovascular fitness. It gets the heart beating faster to transport oxygen rich blood from the lungs to the muscles. The heart and lungs grow more efficient with a regular walking regimen, reducing blood pressure and the resting heart rate. A regular walking program facilitates recovery from many ailments, including heart attack.

Psychologically, walking generates a overall feeling of well-being, and can relieve depression, anxiety, and stress by producing endorphins, the body's natural "feel-good" chemicals. A brisk walk will relax you and stimulate your thinking. Walking is associated with improved sleep, but it is recommended to walk at least an hour before bedtime to allow time for your metabolism to slow down.

How to start? If you have health problems, it is best to consult your health care practitioner. Otherwise, use good judgment. Listen to your body, using experimentation to discover the proper pace and distance for you. You should be able to carry on a conversation while walking. If you are too breathless to talk, you need to slow down.

## **Week Three – Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Love

Love is not something God does, God **IS** love. As God is in each of us, so love is in each of us. Meister Eckhart once said, "let God be God in you." This week consider how others may see God's love in you and how you may recognize the presence of God in those who – at first glance – appear unlovable.

### **A suggested thought:**

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like to it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:37-39*

### **For your health:**

This week we will focus on osteoporosis. What does that have to do with love? Let's look at it this way. Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This implies that we love ourselves and care for ourselves as well as for others. One way to care for yourself is to keep your bones healthy. There, you thought I couldn't make the connection, didn't you? Call this segment "Love your Bones." Bone is a constantly changing matrix with calcium continually being deposited and resorbed. During the growth years, more calcium is deposited than removed, resulting in bone growth. After the completion of puberty, the level of bone growth vs. depletion tends to be relatively constant. As we age, gradually bone resorption increases and bone deposition decreases, resulting in thinning of the bones. Because their bones are less dense to begin with, women are at more risk than men for osteoporosis. They may start developing compression fractures of the vertebrae, which cause back pain and may eventually result in a "dowager's hump". Fractured hips are another complication that can result in hospital stays, surgery, and long periods in an extended care facility and disruptions in family life. It is difficult for hip fractures to heal without the bone building effect of weight-bearing exercise.

Think of your bones a "calcium bank" where you are constantly making deposits and withdrawals. Adequate calcium intake and regular exercise in younger years provide a healthy balance in the bank that can see one through retirement. However, wanton spending can ruin even the best-laid retirement plan. Life long habits of good calcium intake contribute to a healthy bank balance. Never forget the benefits of a well-planned exercise regimen in stimulating the development of new bone mass and arresting bone loss. The exercise most beneficial to bone strength is walking. Weight-bearing exercise is the key, and when we walk, all of our weight is supported by the long bones in our legs and our back.



## **Week Four – Starts (your date)**

### **Theme:** Stress

Stress is a part of our life. A certain amount of stress keeps us on our toes. Only when we allow stress to accumulate does it become dis-stress. This week, reflect on how you cope with stress in your life. How does prayer work in this process?

### **A suggested thought:**

*Have no anxiety about anything, but make all your wants known to God in prayer and entreaty, and with thanksgiving. Philippians 4:6*

### **For your health:**

Physically active people have lower rates of anxiety and depression than more sedentary people. As knowledge of biochemistry grows, so does understanding of how this works. Activity stimulates our brains to produce a number of chemicals associated with feeling happy. Some researchers have called this the "relaxation response" in contrast with the "flight or fight" response to stress. Most obvious are the endorphins, the body's natural opiates that relieve pain and improve mood. These are the chemicals involved in the "runner's high." But they are not the only neurotransmitters involved in mediating the stress response. Exercise also encourages the nerve cells of the brain to secrete other chemicals – serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine - all of which improve general feeling. Recent research suggests that norepinephrine – the mediator of the stress chemical epinephrine – may play the leading role.

The National Institute of Health has found that exercise improves the ability to relax or sleep, promotes self-esteem, enhances energy, concentration, and even memory. Linus Mundy, who writes for Abbey Press, has written about prayer walking – using the time spent walking, not to see how quickly one can reach the end of the route, but to say a prayer, a Bible verse, a meaningful phrase, repeatedly to de-stress the mind. A calming prayer you might use goes like this: "May I be filled with loving kindness; may I be well. May I be peaceful and at ease; may I be happy." After repeating this several times, you may wish to hold another up to the Lord, changing the "I" to "you". This may be someone you love, someone who has hurt you, or someone who annoys the heck out of you on a regular basis. The well-wishing, the repetition, the exercise of walking, all work together to change our brain chemistry to a less stressful state.

## **Week Five – Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Interaction

We live in community with one another. As Episcopalians we worship in common. The Book of Common Prayer does not refer to “ordinary” prayer, but prayer we hold in common with others. We pray in community with our families and with others who share our faith. This week reflect on those who belong to your community.

### **A suggested thought:**

*How excellent are the Lord's faithful people. My greatest pleasure is to be with them.* Psalms 16:3

### **For your health:**

It has been well known for some time that those attend worship services on a regular basis are healthier and live longer than those who do not. Part of the reason for this fact is the system of social support that a faith community provides. People need people; our families, our friends, our church community, all surround us -offering many types of support.

None of us could have walked (5900 miles in twelve weeks) all by ourselves! (That's over xx miles a day) This is an endeavor of community where each can make a contribution at a level that makes sense to them. (Now this is sounding like a stewardship letter.) Which, of course, it is. Practicing stewardship of our physical, mental, and spiritual health is every bit as important as having a role in the fiscal health of the parish community. Whether you exercise alone or with family or friends, your participation in this project makes you a member of a community effort. We have a common goal and each of us has a role in achieving that goal.

When we walk with another we may listen to their concerns and offer support. Many times, when we listen to another, they find that they are able to talk through the issue, arriving at their own solution. They may listen to us and offer perspectives from their own experience. Knowing that we are loved by others, as well as by God, gives a boost to our immune system. That's the healthy body piece. Planning ways to walk our part of the journey is the healthy mind piece. Treasuring the company of others along the way is the healthy spirit piece.

## **Week Six– Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Wisdom

Wisdom is more than knowledge. Wisdom is what you do with your knowledge. Wisdom is fitting new knowledge into what you knew before so that it makes a unified whole. Wisdom is knowing what it is you don't know. Wisdom is knowing that there is often more than one right answer. This week reflect on the wisdom you have acquired thus far.

**A suggested thought:**

*For when wisdom finds a welcome within you, and knowledge becomes a pleasure to you, discretion will watch over you, reason will guard you. Proverbs 2:10-11.*

**For your health:**

In the rather male oriented Bible, Sophia, Wisdom, is female. Interesting. The Scrabble Dictionary defines wisdom as, "the power of true and right discernment." That has a nice ring to it! This week we are going to apply our knowledge of cholesterol metabolism to the power of true and right discernment in the role of walking or other exercise in our lives.

Exercise has been shown to reduce total blood cholesterol, raise HDL (the good cholesterol), lower LDL (the bad cholesterol) and reduce triglycerides (blood fats associated with cholesterol deposits in arteries). However, the reduction in total cholesterol and LDL is only an associated factor with weight loss. Once weight loss has stopped, these substances return to their former levels. So moderate exercise, such as our walk to the Holy Land, actually "only" raises the good cholesterol and lowers triglycerides. Exercise also increases fibrinolysis (the body's ability to dissolve small clots that form continually in the body).

HDL is the good cholesterol because its role is to scavenge the vessels, carrying cholesterol back to the liver to be made into other things. Exercise increases HDL, as does alcohol (in moderation), and estrogen in pre-menopausal women. The alcohol must be consumed in moderation – usually defined as one drink a day for women, two for men – because the liver needs to be in top shape to break down the cholesterol the HDL carries to it.

Exactly how much exercise we need in order to obtain these benefits is unclear. Frequency seems to be important – 5 to 7 times a week is ideal, but benefits have been seen at 3 times a week. Duration is another factor. 30-45 minutes at a time seem to give the best benefit, but breaking this down into 10 or 15 minute segments also appears to work.

## **Week Seven – Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Witnessing

“I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day, I’d rather one would walk with me than merely show the way.” This familiar poem by Edgar Guest reminds us that we witness to what is important to us by the way we live our lives. This week, reflect on what your life tells others about your values.

### **A suggested thought:**

*Be affectionate in your love for the brotherhood, eager to show one another honor, not wanting in devotion, but on fire with the Spirit. Serve the Lord.*  
Romans 12:10-11

### **For your health:**

By walking to (where), we are witnessing to our belief in exercise, health, and the community of the church. When you wear your walking (button/ribbon/shirt), you are witnessing to all of these things. But this is a self-limited project. When (your end date) comes, it will be over. Which is not to say we might not do it, or something similar, again. How will you carry on then? Research tells us that some who participate in a formal group exercise program continue to exercise when the program has ended, many of these will have already had a personal exercise program before they started, and others will immediately go back to their former habits.

As a country, we are increasingly sedentary. Our children are playing on computers instead of on playgrounds. Schools, in some cases, are cutting out physical education classes in favor of more formal classroom time. Many of us do not live where we can walk to the store, so we take the car. It soon becomes such a habit that we take the car to our neighbor’s house also. Even if we did live in reasonable walking distance to work or church, we don’t want to arrive all hot and sweaty, or with wind-blown hair, etc.

Most of us try to witness to our children and grandchildren how we feel about honesty, faith, responsibility to others, and love. We may encourage book reading over television. How do we witness concerning exercise? Do we set a good example? Do we engage in physical activity with our children and grandchildren, or just send them outside to play? Paul may not have meant physical exercise when he told us to be “on fire with the Spirit,” but he certainly walked about a good bit!

## **Week Eight – Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Forgiveness

To often we think of forgiving as something we do for others. But in reality, we do it for ourselves. Holding on to grievances hurts us far more than the person we are not forgiving. It is another of those stress chemical things! Our forgiveness from God depends on our forgiving “those who trespass against us.” This week, reflect on how forgiveness, or the lack of it, has featured in your life.

### **A suggested thought:**

*If you have a grievance against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your offenses.* Mark 11:26

### **For your health:**

We not only can receive forgiveness from God and neighbor, but also from our bodies. When our bodies have been mistreated by poor eating habits, lack of exercise, smoking, or other less than optimum choices, it will forgive us if we repent and amend our ways. After stopping smoking for a number of years – the exact number depends on who you ask- lungs show no signs of damage and are no more likely to develop lung cancer than those who never smoked. Weight can be lost if we have over-indulged; and gained if someone is cured from an eating disorder. Muscle can be built up; flexibility and stamina can be increased. Cholesterol levels can be reduced, blood pressure reduced, and blood sugar stabilized by life style changes.

Exercise plays a role in this amendment of life process. Receiving forgiveness usually is the result of changing behavior. If your neighbor forgives you for keeping him up with a loud riotous party, and if you continue to have such parties, you may find the police at your door. When we ask God for forgiveness, we also promise to try very hard to do better in the future. When we ask our bodies to forgive us, this forgiveness also comes with the necessity for improvement. Our body, unlike God and our neighbor, is unwilling to forgive based on promises and sorry alone. We can't say, “Look, body. I need to loose five pounds by this weekend, and once the party is over, I will go on a diet.” The body wants to see a change of behavior up front. This is the eighth week of our walk. Have you done enough so that your body is forgiving you?

## **Week Nine – Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Expectation

This week, let's consider our expectations for the end of our walk. The stores have been preparing for this season far in advance. – swim suits in January, wool sweaters in August, always expecting what lies ahead. We also are making plans for how we will spend the times of our life after the walk. Those of us participating in this project have been moving toward (your destination) as a preparation for (Christmas, Easter, other.) As you walk this week, think about how your expectations for where God might lead you in days to come.

### **A suggested thought:**

*I will lead my blind people by roads they have never traveled. I will turn their darkness into light and make rough places smooth before them. Isaiah 42:16*

### **For your health:**

The message of preparation for any holiday or season (at least in the media) is one of frenzied joy. But for many, markers of time's passage may be a stressful time. There may be a reminder of losses in the past year or even longer that impact expectations for the coming season. Some think back on pleasant memories that cannot be repeated because of the absence of one of the central persons. Some think back on unpleasant memories and dread their happening over again. Some are distressed over their inability to meet all of the expectations of this time – their own expectations and those of others.

Expectations. Are some of yours due for a change? I know Episcopalians are not noted for their eagerness to change, but change happens anyway. The curve in the road is only dangerous if one fails to make the turn. Sometimes we need to create new rituals to replace ones we no longer can practice.

Focus on the meaning of the Christ. It is so easy to become lost in the business of our lives. Think on the innkeeper in Bethlehem. She is over-booked and more and more people are showing up wanting accommodation and food. Her family members are busy with their own concerns and are not very helpful. She is doing her level best to cope, but just cannot do it all. Many of us can relate. But in the confusion, she turned away the Christ. Do not let expectations make you too busy for Jesus.

## **Week Ten – Starts (your date)**

### **Theme:** Healing

Healing, like health, can have several meanings. To heal can be equated with to cure. A broken leg is healed when it is all-better. But a broken heart may be healed when new perspectives allow one to find peace after a loss. We each have need for healing from our own less than perfect behavior. This week reflect on areas of your life that need healing. Christ asks us, "Do you want to be healed?"

### **A suggested thought:**

I waited patiently for the Lord, and he paid heed to me and heard my plea. ...And he set my feet upon a rock, establishing my steps, and he put a new song in my mouth. *Psalms 40: 1-3*

### **For your health:**

Imagine yourself at the end of your life. If you knew you had only a short time before earthly death, what would be your concerns? Your joys? Your regrets? One thing that causes a great deal of anxiety around end of life is that of unresolved issues. These can be acts of omission – not telling someone how important they have been to you, not healing a quarrel, not making adequate plans with wills, advance directives, funeral and remembrance requests. These omissions not only cause anxiety to the person dying, but also to the family members and other loved ones left behind. Healing at the end of life often consists of resolving these and similar issues.

Everyone is not given time at the end of their life to correct these commissions and omissions. A heart attack, a car accident, can suddenly take any one of us on to our eternal reward. This is one reason why healing should be a day-to-day activity. An even larger reason is the joy and peace we will find in living when our child, parent, spouse, or other knows how much we love and appreciate them. Healing a relationship while there is still time to enjoy it is preferable to a more last-minute repair. Letting family members know what provisions have been made, what decisions you would want made in your behalf is healing to both parties. Saying we are sorry when appropriate brings us as much, if not more, healing than it brings to the other person.

Healing can be of the body, mind or spirit. It can be of a relationship, of an addiction, of a way of living. Sooner is better than later. Do you want to be healed?

## **Week Eleven – Starts (your date)**

### **Theme:** Faith

Faith – To believe in something without tangible proof. It is a word we are accustomed to use in relation to our religious beliefs. To be faithful means to be loyal, to stick by someone or something. Walking is a little like this. We do not see much improvement in just one session, we don't lose weight after forgoing one candy bar. We need faith to continue, to be faithful to good health practices. This week reflect on the faith - or lack - that you show in your actions.

### **A suggested thought:**

*Therefore I tell you, whenever you pray or ask for anything, have faith that it has been granted you, and you shall have it.* Mark 11:24

### **For your health:**

One of our reasons for walking (or other exercise) is for heart health. At times we use "heart" as a symbol for faith. We have a heart-to-heart talk, take something to heart, and believe in our heart-of-hearts. When we are glad, our hearts are light, leap for joy, or sing. When we are sad, they are heavy, they ache, and may even break; when we are frightened, they are in our throats. When angry, our hearts become hard; when giving and forgiving, we are soft-hearted. The pure in heart are to be emulated; the big-hearted are generous; the faint-hearted cowardly; and the stout-hearted are faithful and brave.

How is your heart? Here are the classic signs of a heart attack:

- ❖ Pain, discomfort, pressure in the chest or center back (back pressure more common in women than men)
- ❖ Spreads to the left arm, neck or jaw (arm more common in men, jaw – or ear or tooth – more common in women)
- ❖ Discomfort in the epigastric region (between breastbone and navel)
- ❖ Shortness of breath
- ❖ Nausea
- ❖ A sense of doom or dread

If you or someone you are with has these symptoms, persisting for 15 minutes, call 911 immediately. If the ill person can take aspirin, have them chew one adult (325mg) tablet. If they have nitroglycerine prescribed, take one tablet and repeat twice more at 5-minute intervals if pain persists. They should lie down, as nitroglycerine can drop blood pressure suddenly. If symptoms abate within 15 minutes, call the health care provider for advice.



## **Week Twelve— Starts (your date)**

**Theme:** Joy

Joy is a central theme of our walk's end. The journey to (your destination) is complete. Let us promise to continue to exercise and to pray, to lend a helping hand to one who could use a boost up, an offering of our bodies, minds, and spirits to the work of God. This week reflect on the gifts you have joyously brought to the Christ.

### **A suggested thought:**

(for Christmas) *For unto you this day, in the city of David, is born a Savior, he is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest!* Luke 2:11

(for Easter) *And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation".* Mark 14:15

(for other occasions) *I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.* John 10:10

### **For your health:**

Laughter, they say, is the best medicine. If sorrow shared is halved, joy shared is doubled. Here is a vocabulary word you may not know: gelotology is the physiological study of laughter. Laughter and humor are two different things. Laughter is how our bodies respond to humor. A description of the exact physiologic changes is rather scary, and makes one wonder if this can possibly be good for us! But there is strong evidence that laughter can actually improve health and help fight disease. The chemical effects of laughter inhibit the fight or flight response, so this makes sense.

Laughter may indicate trust in one's companions. We are more apt to laugh when we are in a group where we feel comfortable. And the more laughter there is, the more bonding that occurs within the group. Laughter is contagious and we laugh 30 times more in social situations than when we are alone.

Laughter shuts off the flow of stress hormones that suppress the immune system, increase the number of blood platelets, and raise blood pressure. When we are laughing, natural killer cells that destroy tumors and viruses increase, as do T-cells and B-cells and gamma-interferon (a disease fighting protein). Laughter also increases the concentration of salivary immunoglobulin A, which defends against infections entering through the respiratory tract. The average person laughs 17 times a day – researchers have found that laughing 100 times is equal to 15 minutes on an exercise bicycle. This, sadly, will not count on our walk.

## Sample Article

One mile per day keeps the doctor away . . .

Imagine a crisp fall day with plenty of bright blue sky and sunshine. Leaves crunch underfoot, and the air is cool and refreshing to breathe. There's no better time for a walk.

This fall, ERH's Parish Health Ministry (PHM) team has been busy coordinating a walking program for their partnering congregations, Walk 50 Miles in 50 Days. The program is designed to help people gradually increase their activity levels as the winter months approach. It also helps walkers stay spiritually fit and motivated by including a designated meditation for each mile walked.

Approximately 1,300 people from 45 parishes throughout Southern Ohio participated in the Walk 50 program. More than 625 people signed up in Greater Cincinnati, along with 451 walkers in Dayton, 250 in Columbus and 30 in southeast Ohio.

### SPIRITED WALKING

Walking seems the perfect exercise for body and spirit. All too often when we walk, however, we think about all the things we need to do, or worry about our problems. Even Henry David Thoreau, living in retreat at Walden Pond in the 1800s, recognized these hazards. "I am alarmed when it happens that I have walked a mile into the woods bodily without getting there in spirit," he wrote. "The thought of some work will run in my head, and I am not where my body is. I am out of my senses. In my walks, I would fain return to my senses."

A joyous connection occurs when body, mind and spirit fall in step together. It transforms our walk into a mini-retreat of renewal and realignment. We are guided past the distractions that detour us from a path of wholistic well being.

Millions of people already walk for fitness and health. But without focus, exercise-only walking loses much of its potency. By aligning the energies of muscle, mind and spirit, exercise is more fun, more efficient and more meaningful.

## WALKING WORKS

Lauren Haas, parish nurse at St. Michael and All Angels in Cincinnati, has been delighted with the Walk 50 program.

"We had about 28 people from our parish sign up, plus another 10 from a neighboring church. People are really excited about the program," she says.

"One woman who signed up has severe knee problems and can usually only walk about a half-mile every other day. She told me, 'I don't think I can walk all 50 miles, but at least I'm out there trying.' Her dedication speaks volumes about the value of the program."

PHM Program Coordinator Sue Rank agrees with Haas' observation.

"Nancy Hopkins-Greene, the assistant priest at my church (St. Timothy's in Cincinnati), had just returned from sabbatical," Rank says. "After we kicked off the program to our congregation, she approached me and said she had decided that from now on, she is going to try to participate in and advocate programs and ideas that she is excited about.

"She wrote about the Walk 50 program in our church newsletter, and said, 'There are times when our prayers simply have no words. These are times when we need to simply listen for God, to feel God in the rhythm of our souls and bodies.' She tells people how the program will help them get back into spiritual shape. Her enthusiasm is absolutely contagious."

You can begin to transform your walks into a spirited workout right now by:

- Making a move: Spirited walking begins with the recognition that walking has many parallels to life. Those who walk move forward, take steps and move toward something.
- Taking a chance: Join a walking club or try a different route.
- Venture outside of your comfort zone and step out of your rut.
- Getting an attitude: Be aware of your self-talk; promote positive feelings about yourself. Avoid letting your thoughts wander "willy nilly" while walking. Attitude translates into action. As Henry Ford said, "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're probably right."
- Going for more: Add an inspirational theme to your walk, repeating a prayer, poem, meditation or affirmation.

walking to (wherever)

Address  
City, State Zip Code



Name  
Phone:  
Cell:  
Email:

Week of \_\_\_\_\_

Thought for the walk:

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This week I will pray especially for \_\_\_\_\_

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I offer particular thanks for \_\_\_\_\_

walking to (wherever)

Address  
City, State Zip Code



Name  
Phone:  
Cell:  
Email:

Week of \_\_\_\_\_

Thought for the walk:

---

---

---

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This week I will pray especially for \_\_\_\_\_

---

I offer particular thanks for \_\_\_\_\_

# Walking With God Weekly Accounts

Week of \_\_\_\_\_ Participant # \_\_\_\_\_

Activity (ies) \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Miles							

Observations or inspirations from the walk or other activity:

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Week of \_\_\_\_\_ Participant # \_\_\_\_\_

Activity (ies) \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Miles							

Observations or inspirations from the walk or other activity:

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Week of \_\_\_\_\_ Participant # \_\_\_\_\_

Activity (ies) \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Miles							

Observations or inspirations from the walk or other activity:

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# Walking With God Weekly Accounts

Week of \_\_\_\_\_ Participant # \_\_\_\_\_

Activity (ies) \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Miles							

Observations or inspirations from the walk or other activity:

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We have come

2000 miles

We are still

walking on

water!

There are 106 participants!

29 turned in miles for the week of

10/26

The champion for the week is

Participant # 92

who logged 34 miles!!!

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