

Join the **21 Days of Gratefulness Challenge** starting the 1st of November. Post one thing you're grateful for every day on [our social media](#) site for 21 days. Practicing gratitude boosts overall wellness; it can make people happy and even inspire them to exercise more.

Give Gifts with Meaning... Pull out of the culture hype of bigger = better and use this gift-giving season to make a meaningful connection to someone who matters while staying within your values and your budget. Give to define your relationship and strengthen your ties to family and friends. Measure your gift giving in terms of the amount of joy you can spread.

Start by setting a budget. Make a list of the people you want to give gifts to and how much you would like to spend. Keep the list close to you for easy reference, and do your best to stick to it.

Mindful gift giving has a positive psychological and emotional effect on us. It reinforces our feeling for another person and allows us to communicate that we care.

So go ahead, spread more joy, incur less debt and enjoy your holiday gift-giving. True joy lies in the act of giving without an expectation of receiving something in return. Visit our [Wellness Reach](#) Facebook page for more gift giving ideas.

Gift-Giving Ideas:

- Act of Kindness. Leaving a gift on someone's doorstep, whether it's a stranger, neighbor, family member or friend, is a way to boost their day and display how much you care for them. Whether it's a home-cooked meal, baked goods or something else that you know will make them smile.
- Instead of buying material gifts, make a donation to a charity your recipient would support.
- A gift of an "experience" can create lasting memories and a deeper feeling of happiness. Many experience gifts are often a really social experience. Physical gifts last longer than experiences timewise, but the powerful, happy memories created during an experience gift can truly last a lifetime! Experience ideas include: a trip; season passes to their favorite activity, i.e., Broadway shows, zoo, amusement parks, etc.; lessons to learn something new, i.e., piano, guitar, cooking, etc.
- Gift to someone in secret. If you know someone that is struggling, find ways to relieve their burdens. "So that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:4 (NIV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORY CHALLENGE

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever."
Psalm 136:1

UPCOMING EVENTS

21 Days of Gratefulness
November

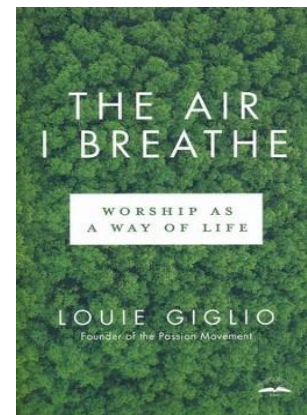
Sneaker Sunday
Nov 6th

Praise Moves
9 a.m. Monday, Friday
11:30 a.m. Wednesday
Rec Center

RECOMMENDED READ

The Air I Breathe: Worship as a Way of Life

True freedom comes when worship flows through us as naturally as the air we breathe. Pastor and worship leader, Louie Giglio, believes that our whole lives can become worship when we open our hearts and minds to the wonder and presence of God each moment.



Lace up your tennis shoes and join us in wearing your sneakers to church for **Sneaker Sunday, Nov 6th**. After services, join us at the Communion Park walking trail (located in the wooded area adjacent to the main parking lot) for a chance to walk, connect with others, grab a snack, and meditate on God's word in His creation. You can walk as little or as much as you would like. There will be scripture passages posted along the trail to provide an opportunity for meditation and prayer and to put some wellness learning into practice.

Did you know that walking is the most popular exercise activity for adults? It provides a ton of health benefits. It may lower your risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes. It can strengthen your bones and muscles. It may help you maintain a healthy weight. It might also help lift your mood. A major goal of the [Wellness Reach Initiative](#) has been to provide practical ways to grow in your spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, financial, and relational health.

We hope to see you there.

Did You Know?

The psychology experts at Harvard Medical School praise gratitude, "In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness.

Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships."

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

From the Kitchen of Mark & Sherri Stricker

Recipe Green Beans Casserole – The Real Food Way

Servings 6

Ingredients

1 1/2 pounds fresh green beans trimmed and cut into 3-inch pieces
 2 tbsp unsalted butter
 2 cloves garlic minced
 1 small yellow onion finely chopped
 8 oz mushrooms sliced 1/4" thick
 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme leaves or 3/4 tsp. dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Add crumbled bacon to taste
Sauce:
 4 tbsp unsalted butter
 1/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
 2 cups whole milk
 1 tsp. Pink Himalayan salt
Topping:
 1 tbsp unsalted butter
 1 tbsp coconut oil
 1/2 cup sliced shallots
 1/2 cup whole wheat or sourdough bread crumbs, Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Prepare Beans and Mushrooms - Fill large pot with water and sprinkle with a little salt. Bring to boil and add green beans. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes until they are crisp tender. Drain and set aside. While beans are cooking, melt butter in a large pan. Turn to medium-low and sauté onion and garlic in the butter until soft. Add mushrooms and thyme. Stir and sauté until the mushrooms release their juices. Continue cooking until the juices are reduced. Season with salt and pepper. **Make Sauce. Using Whole Wheat Pastry Flour** - Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan. Whisk in the flour and cook for a minute or two (this will reduce the "floury" taste). Add milk to saucepan, pouring in slowly while whisking continually. Add salt and stir to distribute throughout. Continue to cook, stirring frequently, until sauce thickens to the point where it will coat a spoon. **Combine Sauce, Beans, and Mushrooms** - Combine cooked green beans and mushroom/thyme mixture in a large bowl. Gently stir until mixed. Pour the sauce over the top and stir until evenly distributed. Pour into a well greased 9 by 11 inch baking dish. **Make Topping as noted in the ingredients** - In a skillet or sauté pan, melt butter and coconut oil over medium-high heat. Add sliced shallots, cooking about 3 to 4 minutes until soft and turning golden. Add the bread crumbs and stir to coat with oil. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle topping over casserole. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the bread crumbs are golden brown and the cream sauce is bubbling.