

## Health

One way to participate in the PHW program is through their certification and mini grant initiative. Any faith community working to promote health and wellness can become a certified congregation by reporting the health and wellness activities its members have participated in and completed over the year in accordance with the three certification levels (bronze, silver or gold). Each level requires a greater commitment to ongoing health and wellness activities in the congregation. Once certified, congregations are eligible to apply for a mini grant to help fund their health initiatives. Each certification level corresponds with a specific level of mini-grant funding, starting at \$500, \$750 and \$1,000.

"We want to make sure we help people that are invested in creating a healthy, whole congregation and community," Motley said. "That way we help folks that are already invested in health have a greater impact and continue down that path with PHW resources and support."

Another component of the program helps faith leaders pledge their commitment in taking steps to improve their own health, Motley said. "When we have faith leaders commit to and model healthy behavior, we can see a significant difference in how the congregation is willing to embrace that change as well."

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As a health and wellness role model and leader within her church, Linda Tyndall is a tough act to follow. Tyndall, a wife and mother of two with two stepsons, all of them grown, has been a member of Faith Community Christian Center in Lumberton, NC, for 15 years. Within her congregation and community, she is known as "the Church Doctor," said Tyndall, a woman with an infectious laugh.

One of the first things she did when she started leading health and wellness initiatives at the church was encourage members to replace sugary drinks with water at church functions and at home. Later she helped develop a community garden on church property as a way for members as well as people from the community to access fresh produce and encourage the consumption of more fruits and vegetables.

Lumberton, a rural community where the estimated annual income is less than \$30,000, and various communities experience challenges to accessing healthy and high-quality foods. "So many people in the church don't realize that poor health bogs them down, prevents them from moving ahead, accomplishing things," Tyndall said. Many in the church didn't jump on the bandwagon immediately, she said, but she understands that change doesn't come easily. "Just you doing your little part, no matter how small, you never know the impact it might make."



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