

First English Lutheran Church's Mental Health Initiative



In challenging, lonely times: Where do you seek courage and strength? To whom do you turn for support? For whom do you offer support?

Mental health and illness has touched all our lives in some way. The spectrum of mental health crosses the physical, emotional, thought, relational, and behavioral realms.

Mental health is fortified in a variety of ways. These ways can be likened to a wall. Who or what would constitute the bricks of your wall of resilience and hope, one of resistance to despair, a pathway through hardships, (family, friends, classmates, relatives, teachers, clergy, neighbors, choir members)? Are you part of someone's wall?

FELC has joined a coalition of churches launching a Mental Health component to its programs addressing: education, support, intervention, and recovery. Your FELC team is spearheading the drive to provide guidance for mental wellness and support. We want our church to be a safe and compassionate place of respite, trust, inspiration, hope, and a source of spiritual strength.

Each time you extend a hand or flash a smile to welcome someone or share a sign of peace, you are connecting, supporting, caring . . . cementing a brick in that wonderful wall of hope and resilience.

Praying for wisdom and God's guidance in this quest.

FELC's Mental Health Awareness Team

Deb Blank, Kathy DesRochers, Dianne Droster, Matt Hechel,
Kristy Howard, Carla Jones, Jim Lain, Doug Moard,
Michelle Moldenhauer, Kirsten Owens, Terry Seefeldt,
Pastor Jeff Tengesdal, Abby VanderLoop

May Is Mental Health Awareness Month

During the month of May, there will be many opportunities in our congregation and community to increase awareness of mental health and to decrease the stigma related to mental illnesses. One in five Americans is affected by mental health conditions, and stigma, shame and fear prevent many of them from seeking help and treatment.

First English's Mental Health Awareness Team is doing its part during this month. There will be messages and a sermon, handouts and Facebook posts, and an adult forum.

What Can You Do?

- Stop by the table in the Gathering Area (look for the green tablecloth) to pick up a green Mental Health Awareness ribbon to wear all month long.
- While you're at the table, pick up a Gratitude Card to let friends and loved ones (or yourself!) know how special they are - just the way God made them!
- Continue to watch the bulletin inserts, website, Facebook page and the green table for additional educational and informational materials or resources.

We all can further assist by spreading God's non-judging love for all, supporting those who wrestle with mental illness, being attentive to our own words and deeds that perpetuate the stigma, and being open about our own struggles.