

FaithCommunitiesalive!

A partnership of NDSU Extension Service, Cass County Extension Service and community partners, with funding from Dakota Medical Foundation

Issue 15 April 2015

FCA Fire Up for Spring Breakfast

Don't Forget!

**Tuesday, April 28, 2015
9 to 11 a.m.**

Dakota Medical Foundation

4141 28th Ave. S. – Fargo

Please come and bring a volunteer.

RSVP to bevgravdahl@dakmed.org

MISSION:

To transform our faith communities to make active living and healthy eating the easy choice.



VISION:

Individuals and families in the FM community will embrace the concept of health within a Faith Community setting, as it encompasses body, mind and spirit.

GOAL:

To engage the Fargo-Moorhead/Cass-Clay Community in “Faith Communities Alive!” by providing collaborative training, education, tools and support to faith communities addressing healthful eating and physical activity to promote overall well-being.

Welcome!

Welcome to Peace Lutheran Church – now engaged in FaithCommunitiesAlive! Peace Lutheran Church, located in Fargo, is a “very active congregation that prides itself in being a friendly community, as well as supportive of social ministry, global missions, youth and family enrichment, and many fellowship and support groups.” FCA Engagement Committee is very excited to have the opportunity to work with this vibrant faith community! Senior Pastor, Josh Schunk, is pictured.



Welcome April and the Colors of



Do you look forward to the green grass, red and yellow tulips and all the other beautiful, blooming colors of spring? In honor of nature's rebirth and the beauty around us, we are focusing on maintaining healthy vision in this newsletter. April has two national observances for eye health: "Sports Eye Safety Awareness Month" and "Women's Eye Health and Safety Month."

We may experience several changes in vision as we age. Between the ages of 40 and 50, seeing objects closer than two feet may become difficult. We notice this when we have difficulty reading the phone book or the newspaper (and we need longer arms!). We might notice that seeing in dim light becomes more difficult, so we may need a brighter light for reading. Colors may be perceived differently, and blues may appear gray. We may notice a decrease in our ability to see differences in shades and tones or may have more difficulty seeing fine details. We may see an increase in the amount of floaters or our eyes may become drier.

How can we protect our eyes? Consider these tips:

Wear sunglasses. Protect your eyes from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays when outdoors. Be sure your sunglasses have UV-A and UV-B protection to block both forms of ultraviolet rays.

Get regular exercise. Exercise improves blood circulation, increases oxygen levels to the eyes and aids in the removal of toxins. (Check out the article about upcoming "Walk This Way" events!)

Look away from your computer screen. Staring at a computer screen for too long can cause eyestrain, blurry vision, trouble focusing at a distance, dry eyes, headaches, and neck, back, and shoulder pain. Take the following steps to help protect your eyes from vision stress:

- Position your computer so that your eyes are level with the top of the monitor. This allows you to look slightly down at the screen.
- Try to avoid glare on your computer from windows and lights. Use an anti-glare screen if needed.
- Every 20 minutes, rest your eyes by looking 20 feet away for 20 seconds. At least every 2 hours, get up and take a 15 minute break to be away from the computer screen.

Visit your Eye Doctor Regularly. Everyone should get their eyes examined at least one time a year. For more information about eye care, see the American Optometric Association at www.aoa.org

Eat Healthfully. Protecting your eyes starts with the food on your plate. Nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, lutein, zinc, and vitamins A, C and E might help reduce your chances of vision problems. (Check out the two articles about eye-healthy foods written by Dietetic Interns with the NDSU Extension Service.)

Walk This Way Events Scheduled

Spring is finally here and that means it's time for Walk This Way! Mayor Tim Mahoney helped kick off this annual series of 13 walking/biking events on March 24 at the Fargo City Commission Room. Visit fmwalkthisway.com to register for the walks, view walking route maps, and receive updated event information. Participants may also register at each event.

There is no cost to participate and participants are eligible for prize drawings at each event. Individuals who attend five or more walks are entered into a final drawing for a chance to win a Sunday night stay at the Hotel Donaldson, a \$50 West Acres gift card or a \$50 Hornbacher's gift card. Registered participants can ride free on Metro Area Transit buses during the week of April 20-25, by showing their "Walk This Way" passport.



EATING SMART AT HOME



Shop for Value, Check the Facts

EATING SMART for a GOOD START

Look for the "Good in Food"

Nutrition Labels

Comparing Labels

Check ingredients

Read the Advertising

Saturday April 25th 10:00-11:30 am

Snacks will be served

Reminder of Resources Available for You

Please help promote physical and spiritual wellbeing with these FCA resources, available online or from Bev Gravdahl, our project coordinator.

- Table tents and healthful eating articles connected to Biblical passages.
- Displays about healthful eating. Check these out through Bev.
- "Wish list" items. See the email from Bev. Remember these are due in April!
- Facebook page. Be sure to "like" and "comment" to ensure the posts appear in your news feed.
- Gardening and physical activity resources (see the FCA website).
- For more resources for people 50-plus, check out "Nourishing Boomers and Beyond" at www.ndsu.edu/boomers where you can access a free e-newsletter and a variety of resources.



Time to Garden!

The FCA website has many resources for gardening and food preservation. Check out the free online gardening resources available on the NDSU Extension Service – Cass County website: www.ag.ndsu.edu/casscountyextension/horticulture

Focus on Eye-healthy Foods:

Have You Tried Kale?



Eating fruits and vegetables that contain certain nutrients can help prevent eye problems such as macular degeneration, glaucoma, and cataracts. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics promotes eating kale, sweet potatoes, strawberries and other foods that are rich in nutrients important for eye health.

Kale is a leafy green that is full of nutrients. It contains lutein and zeaxanthin, two natural pigments that are believed to protect the eyes from sunlight damage and reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Your body needs fat in order to absorb lutein and zeaxanthin. Consider adding a little olive oil, which contains healthy fats, to your kale. Kale also contains vitamin C and beta carotene which are good for your eye health. Vitamin C can help lower your risk for cataracts while beta carotene may help slow the progress of macular degeneration. Beta carotene is converted to vitamin A in the body and both beta carotene and vitamin A can help fight off eye infections.

Kale is considered to be a biennial vegetable which means that it will require two seasons to complete its growing season. Kale grows best in the spring and fall and can tolerate fall frosts. The flavor of kale can actually be improved by a moderate frost or light snow. Kale can be planted from early spring to early summer. If planted in late summer, kale can be harvested through the fall until the ground freezes. According to the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, North Dakota growers can expect to harvest a kale crop from June to October.

Kale is ready to harvest when the leaves are about the size of your hand. It is recommended to pick about one fistful of leaves per harvest. Once harvested, you can store kale in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. It should last about one to two weeks. You can use the small, tender leaves for salads. Cut and cook the larger leaves as you would cook spinach making sure to remove the ribs before cooking. For more tips on how to grow kale visit: <http://www.almanac.com/plant/kale>

Source: Compiled by Allison Dhuvetter, Dietetic Intern – NDSU Extension Service

Information for this article was obtained from www.eatright.org. This website provides evidenced-based health and nutrition information published by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. For more information visit: <http://www.eatright.org/resource/health/wellness/preventing-illness/5-top-foods-for-eye-health> and <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/fall-produce-picks>



Eye-healthy Sweet Potatoes Are Nutrition-packed

A medium sweet potato provides over 300% of the daily recommendation for vitamin A as beta-carotene, which is an important vitamin that plays a role in eye health. However, vitamin A is a fat soluble vitamin, so be sure to eat your sweet potatoes with a little fat. Sweet potatoes are fairly low in calories. A medium baked sweet potato (2 inches in diameter and 5 inches in length) has about 100 calories, with the skin, which makes managing your weight that much easier.

Consider growing sweet potatoes in your garden. The sweet potato plant can be grown when there have been 100 to 125 frost-free days to develop. Once planted, sweet potato sprouts will produce their nutritious, flavorful roots. Growing sweet potatoes in North Dakota just requires a little bit of “extra care” according to horticulture experts.

Planting Instructions:

1. About one week before planting, mound soil in a row, cover this with black plastic and secure the edges down.
2. Plant out the plants after danger of frost has passed.
3. When planting, cut a slash in the plastic and plant about 18 inches apart.
4. Water plants when planting and again a couple times in the following days.

Before frost, cut a couple lengths of foliage and plant them in the house. You will have a nice plant in the house for the winter. Cut the plant up in the spring and root the pieces in moist soil to plant out again.

Follow proper storage procedures to have fresh, sweet and delicious sweet potatoes. Avoid storing sweet potatoes in the refrigerator; this will produce a hard center and unpleasant taste. Instead, store them in a cool, dry, well ventilated container. The basement or a root cellar are the best places to store sweet potatoes. They will remain high in quality for about two weeks if stored properly.

For more information about sweet potatoes, see:

- www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/hortiscope/fruitveg/swtptato.htm
- www.ncsweetpotatoes.com/sweet-potatoes-101/store-sweet-potatoes/

Source: Compiled by Hannah Colby, Dietetic Intern – NDSU Extension Service

Recipe of the Month

If you bring this to a potluck, people will ask you for the recipe. More recipes are available from the NDSU Extension Service database (www.ag.ndsu.edu/food).



Baked Sweet Potatoes and Apples

5 medium-sized, cooked sweet potatoes (dark orange-fleshed variety)

4 apples

1/2 c. brown sugar

1/2 tsp. salt

1/4 c. margarine or butter

1 tsp. nutmeg

1/4 c. hot water

2 Tbsp. honey

Cinnamon (optional)

Boil the sweet potatoes in water until they are almost tender. After the sweet potatoes cool, peel and slice them. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Peel the apples, remove the cores and slice. Spray a casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray. Put a layer of sweet potatoes on the bottom of the dish. Add a layer of apple slices. Sprinkle with sugar, salt and tiny pieces of margarine or butter. Repeat layering process, adding some sugar, salt and margarine to each layer. On the top layer, sprinkle the rest of the brown sugar and margarine and an optional sprinkling of cinnamon. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Mix the hot water with honey. Pour over the top layer. Bake for about 30 minutes or until apples are tender.

Makes eight servings. Each serving has 225 calories, 6 grams (g) of fat, 44 g of carbohydrate, 4.5 g of fiber and more than a full day's recommendation for vitamin A (as beta carotene).

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Project Engagement Committee

- ❖ Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., Professor and Food and Nutrition Specialist/FaithCommunitiesAlive! Project Leader (701-231-7187); julie.garden-robinson@ndsu.edu
- ❖ Rita Ussatis, M.S., L.N., Extension Agent Cass County/FaithCommunitiesAlive! Project Co-Leader (701-241-5700); rita.ussatis@ndsu.edu
- ❖ Bev Gravdahl, B.S.N., R.N., F.C.N., Healthy Steps Outreach Manager, Dakota Medical Foundation/FaithCommunitiesAlive! Project Coordinator (701-356-3134); bevgravdahl@dakmed.org
- ❖ Becky Berg, R.D., Graduate Student, NDSU Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences (701-231-8592); Rebecca.m.berg@ndsu.edu
- ❖ Kim Lipetzky, M.N.S., L.R.D., Nutritionist, Fargo Cass Public Health (701-241-8195); klipetzky@cityoffargo.com
- ❖ Betty Larson, Ed.D., L.R.D., FADA, Professor, Concordia College (218-299-3748); blarson@cord.edu
- ❖ Carrie McLeod, M.B.A., M.S., L.R.D., C.D.E., Enterprise Community Benefit/Community Health Improvement, Sanford Health (701-234-3464); carrie.mcleod@sanfordhealth.org
- ❖ Katie Gross, B.S.N., R.N., Parish Nurse Coordinator, First Lutheran Church (701-235-7389, extension 143); Katie.gross@flcfargo.org
- ❖ Lois Ustanko, B.S.N., M.H.A., Director of Faith Community Nursing, Sanford Health (701-234-5818); lois.ustanko@sanfordhealth.org
- ❖ Barb Hanson, B.S.N., R.N., Parish Nurse Volunteer Atonement Lutheran Church (701-237-9651)
- ❖ Rory Beil, Director CassClayAlive!, Dakota Medical Foundation (701-893-6366); rorybeil@dakmed.org
- ❖ Alyssa Gullekson, Program Coordinator, CassClayAlive!, Dakota Medical Foundation (218-686-8082); alyssagullekson@dakmed.org

Website: www.ag.ndsu/FaithCommunitiesAlive/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fmfaithcommunitiesalive>

Check out the pictures and ideas on our Facebook page at:

www.facebook.com/fmfaithcommunitiesalive

Please add your comments and ideas.