

# LIGHTEN UP NEWS, February 2002

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**Funding:** The Duke Endowment & Your Donations. Tax-deductible contributions can be sent to:

Health Science Foundation, 18 Bee Street, PO Box 250450, Charleston, SC 29425. Make checks payable to *Lighten Up*.

Website – <http://www.lightenupforever.org>

Email: [lightenup@musc.edu](mailto:lightenup@musc.edu)

**TIME lists “10 Foods that Pack a Wallop”.** “Used correctly, they have the power to prevent all kinds of serious ailments, including heart disease, diabetes, and even cancer.” The foods listed were: tomatoes, spinach, red wine, nuts, broccoli, oats, salmon, garlic, green tea, & blueberries. What foods would you put at the top of your list?

Food is a complex mixture of many nutrients. Variety and moderation are the best rules for making food decisions for health. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables!

<u>SESSIONS</u>	Morris Brown AME Charleston Thursday 6:15 pm	Jerusalem Baptist Charleston Tuesday 6:30 pm	Brownsville Church of God Summerville Wednesday 5:30 pm	St. Peter AME North Charleston Saturday 9:30 am	Harbor Light Baptist James Island Thursday 6 pm	Our Lady of Grace Greensboro, NC Monday 7 pm
Health Check	Sat, Jan 12	Sat, Jan 19	Sat, Jan 26	Feb 2	Sat, Feb 9	Sat, Feb 2
Love	Jan 17	Jan 22	Jan 30	Feb 9	Feb 14	Feb 4
Knowledge	Jan 24	Jan 29	Feb 6	Feb 16	Feb 21	Feb 11
Peace	Jan 31	Feb 5	Feb 13	Feb 23	Feb 28	Feb 18
Faith	Feb 7	Feb 12	Feb 20	March 2	March 7	Feb 25
Kindness	Feb 14	Feb 19	Feb 27	March 9	March 14	March 4
Joy	Feb 21	Feb 26	March 6	March 16	March 21	March 11
Self-control	Feb 28	March 5	March 13	March 23	March 28	March 18
Godliness	March 7	March 12	March 20	April 6	April 4	March 25
Health Check	Sat, Mar 9	Sat, Mar 9	March 23	April 13	April 6	April 6



Rhoda Ascanio, Program Assistant, explaining cholesterol results

## HEALTH CHECKS: Skip your breakfast! (8-10 am)

The health checks will help you learn your risk for heart disease and monitor your progress. If you live in the Charleston area, you have 5 locations where you can “make-up” a health check or session. The website, [www.lightenupforever.org](http://www.lightenupforever.org), lists the addresses and dates and is updated regularly, because schedules always change! Also, we will work with you. Call us to schedule your health check (792-3047).

Please note that the Morris Brown and Jerusalem Baptist groups will have a **combined** health check on **Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>** at Morris Brown AME !

**The DUKE Endowment features Lighten Up** in their publication, ISSUES, Winter 2002, No. 19. Karen Doyle wrote the article while Michael Mauney came to take

pictures. I have excerpted part of the article for your reading pleasure, while the entire article can be found at by clicking on the “Treating the BODY as a TEMPLE” link at <http://www.lightenupforever.org>.



Ercelle Chillis and Mary Joan

## TREATING THE BODY AS A TEMPLE MUSC, Churches Spread the Gospel of Healthful Living

*By Karen Doyle , Photos by Michael Mauney*

By all accounts, Ercelle Chillis is a strong, independent woman. At 87 years young, she's often found riding her lawnmower or pushing her wheelbarrow around her yard at home near Charleston, SC. When it came to losing a few extra pounds and reducing her blood pressure and cholesterol, however, she decided she needed the added strength of a higher power.

“You have to pray about it, you really do,” she says, her voice clear as a church bell. “I had the faith to know that if I asked His help, He would help.”

...“When people put God first, they realize they are making changes for a higher purpose,” says *Lighten Up* director Mary Joan Oexmann, a 25-year nutritionist and a member of MUSC's faculty. “Change is a very personal thing, but guilt is not an essential nutrient. Sometimes people aren't able to make healthy changes themselves, and then they carry that guilt. We help people feel good about themselves, build on the success of Christian disciplines, and understand that there is no quick fix.”

The ten-week program includes an initial health screening; eight weekly meetings featuring Bible study, prayer and health education; and a follow-up health screening to determine participants' progress.



Rev. James Fields at Plymouth  
Congregational United Church of Christ

“It's really a worthwhile program,” says the Reverend James Fields, of Charleston's Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ. “You realize what harm you do to yourself when you practice gluttony-which, of course, is a sin.”

Plymouth Congregational was the second church to join *Lighten Up*, and its congregants have been “very intense” about the program, Fields says. “Just about everybody found some way to change their habits.” He adds that he himself has learned to control his diabetes, reduce his blood pressure, and lower his cholesterol. He also has lost, and kept off, 15 pounds.

*Lighten Up* is built on faith. If lifestyle changes were easy, it would have already been done.

...The congregation of Vandalia Presbyterian Church, in Greensboro, NC, has just joined the *Lighten Up* bandwagon. A congregational nurse in a neighboring church had recommended the program to Lois Bazhaw, Vandalia's parish nurse, who was - and is - concerned about her

church members' health. "There are too many people with high blood pressure, too many fat little kids running around," Bazhaw explains. "*Lighten Up* shows me definite outcomes and gives me guidelines for each member's individual needs. The timing (to join) was perfect." Bazhaw firmly believes in the interdependent relationship between body, mind and soul, likening the balance of the three to a three-legged stool. If one of the components is removed, the stool-and the person on it-become unbalanced.

"*Lighten Up* helps people keep up their emotional stamina," she continues. "It's almost like a support network with regular meetings that put responsibility on the individual: 'You make choices every day of your life - who am I going to eat with? What am I going to eat? And how much?' *Lighten Up* allows people to focus on who they are, where they are and where they want to be." It's about lifestyle change, not just weight management, Bazhaw emphasizes; about asking God "to grant the patience to do what's right for my body."

"It's all about self-control," Chillis agrees. With a family history of high blood pressure and diabetes, she joined *Lighten Up* expecting "a lot of exercise and jumping around." What she found, instead, was common-sense guidance and age-old wisdom. "I enjoyed it so much, once I got the hang of it," she says, two years later and fifteen pounds lighter. "Now I look in the mirror, and I like myself."

"...Word of mouth has been *Lighten Up's* best promotion," says Oexmann. "We have people calling us from churches and academic centers from across the country. We've only just begun."

*Special thanks to The Duke Endowment, Karen, Michael, Ercelle, Ruth Singleton, Rev. Fields, Lois, Inez Brown-Crouch, Rhoda & others for your time and encouragement producing this article.*

**Set Goals & Be Successful!** Making lifestyle changes to improve your health requires setting goals that are realistic and specific. Take ownership by stating positive goals that are important to YOU! Losing 10 pounds, lowering your blood cholesterol or blood pressure sounds good; but goals should be specific in action and related to time. Use your journal to write down your goals, set priorities, and succeed!

1. I will enjoy walking with a neighbor or my children for 30 minutes today.
2. I will eat my meals with my family tonight, rather than eating in front of the TV.
3. I will eat yogurt and fruit for breakfast today, rather than bacon and eggs.
4. I will eat a bowl of soup and bread for lunch today, rather than a cheeseburger.
5. I will drink water at work today, rather than a sweetened soda or sugared coffee.
6. I will eat 2 vegetarian meals this week.
7. I will buy flowers on Friday, rather than eating desserts.
8. I will encourage fellow *Lighten Up* participants by telephoning 3 people today.

**A Short Prayer.** *Keep me humble, keep me kind, and lead me to Thee divine. MJO*

**Invest in Lighten Up!** Make a tax deductible donation today! Make checks payable to LIGHTEN UP and send to Health Science Foundation, 18 Bee Street, PO Box 250450, Charleston, SC 29425.



**Children Stretching at Morris Brown AME**

## ***What is Your Excuse?***

No time. No money. It hurts too much!

## ***Benefits to Exercise!***

1. Increases strength and endurance.
2. Burns calories.
3. Relieves stress.
4. Decreases depression.
5. Decreases blood pressure.
6. Increases the good cholesterol (HDL).
7. Improves glucose tolerance.

It can be a private time for meditation or a shared time with a loved one. It's fun!

***Walk 30 minutes today.***

***You're Worth It!***



***Lighten Up***

***Digestive Disease Center***

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