PATHWAYS to Promise
Connecting Communities of Care

Mental Health Ministries

SPOTLIGHT
Winter 2026

Pathways to Promise & Mental Health Ministries

Mental Health Ministries, a program of Pathways to Promise, provides resources to erase the stigma of mental illness in our faith communities and create caring congregations for persons living with mental health challenges and their families.

Mental Health Multifaith Resource Center (MHMRC)

Our Mental Health Multifatih Resource Library is your comprehensive destination for mental health and wellness information. We have meticulously curated this resource center to ensure ease of use and to provide you with the most relevant materials. This library builds upon the outstanding work initiated by Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, who founded Mental Health Ministries in 2001.

Visit the MHMRC

Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash

Winter can intensify loneliness, grief, stress, and disconnection. Companionship is our steady, dignifying response: safe welcome, compassionate listening, walking side-by-side, and practical support to community and care. Pathways to Promise trains people to be companions, who engage in these five simple and profound practices for connection. In the next few issues of Spotlight, we'll review each of these five.

Hospitality

By Rev. Mark Stephenson
Pathways to Promise Board President and Executive Director

When thinking about hospitality, most of us picture it as offering another person an invitation to our home where we share food and drink together. As the first practice of Companionship, The Companionship Movement founder Dr. Craig Rennebohm envisions rest and refreshment flowing out of a much broader understanding of hospitality. At its heart, hospitality is a way of being present with another. In his book, The Way of Companionship: Welcoming the Stranger, he writes,

"The practice of Hospitality is all about creating a space in which a person who may feel uncomfortable, wary, or fearful can feel safe and welcome. We seek to establish a space that is sacred in the personal sense, a space where we listen to the other person's story and find the connection to our own. Within this space, each of us must feel safe to be who we are, to receive and accept each other without an ulterior motive and without passing judgment."

Creating that safe space begins with treating the other person as worthy of respect, valuing them as a fellow human being, and offering them the dignity of deciding whether and when they choose to interact with you. Hospitality never forces, but always invites, and, by the way, that invitation may include a cup of coffee and a bite to eat.

Explore Upcoming Training Events to Become a Companion or Community Trainer

JOIN US!
Become a Companion
Build meaningful connections and provide spiritual support through Companionship Training
3-HOUR VIRTUAL WORKSHOP
SIGN UP ONLINE: PATHWAYS2PROMISE.ORG
PATHWAYS to Promise

***Become a Companion* Workshop**
Wednesday, November 12th 5-8:30 pm CT
Register for Become a Companion Here

ATTEND
Community Trainer Training
Make a difference by becoming a Companionship Workshop Trainer!
2-DAY VIRTUAL COURSE
APPLICATION REQUIRED
PATHWAYS to Promise

Community Trainer Training
Wednesday, November 12th 5-8:30 pm CT
PLUS Saturday, November 15th 9 am-5 pm CT
For more information and to register/apply, click here

Learn More About Training Opportunities Here

ATTEND
Taste of Companionship
Come to this 30-minute Zoom session for a presentation about Pathways and our Companionship program with time for questions
PATHWAYS to Promise

Attend *Taste of Companionship*

Taste of Companionship introduces Companionship and provides time for questions and answers, all in about half an hour. Our executive director, Dr. George, participates as available.

- **Wed., February 4, 12 PM CT**
- **Wed., March 4, 12 PM CT**
- **Wed., April 1, 12 PM CT**

(Contact admin@pathways2promise.org for Zoom support.)

Register Here on the Pathways to Promise Homepage

All of the following articles from websites other than pathways2promise.org are intended as a library of resources only. Pathways to Promise receives no financial benefit from these organizations.

JANUARY

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for January.

Mental Wellness Awareness Month

"As we step into a new year, consider ways to prioritize the importance of mental well-being. January is recognized as Mental Well-being Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about mental health issues, sharing resources to reduce stigma surrounding mental health topics, and encouraging proactive steps toward maintaining mental well-being. Prioritizing mental health is vital for leading a fulfilling life which can lead to healthier communities. Remember, every effort counts in creating a healthier, happier community."

Click here to read more

Korean American Day - January 13

KOREAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES

"Our fourth episode of Season Two of CKA's Korean American Perspectives podcast series features Jeanie Chang, Founder of Your Change Provider, PLLC, as well as a licensed marriage and family therapist.

Jeanie is passionate about serving people, couples, and families alike through a holistic culturally competent approach. She shares valuable insight into navigating the perils of parenthood, as well as how we can be empowered to take care of our own mental health. Jeanie reminds us that our community's strength depends on people supporting and looking out for one another. Throughout our lives, we should always be intentional and mindful in our interactions with our family, friends, and coworkers. You never know what somebody is going through unless you ask and listen."

Click here to learn more

World Religion Day - January 18

Happy World Religion Day from Covenant House

"As we look ahead to World Religion Day on January 18, we wanted to share this reflection early, because the values it honors guide our work with young people every single day..On this day that celebrates the unity of faith traditions, we are reminded that supporting homeless young people is an act of faith in them. It's an act of solidarity as these youth make the difficult journey to a better life for themselves.

Today is about having faith in our young people, faith in the good in one another, and faith in a future without homelessness."

Click here to learn more

MLK Jr. Day - January 19

KING
MISSION POSSIBLE

"Each year, the King Holiday Observance calls us to reflect, rejoice, and recommit, to honor the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the transformative power of his vision. As the living memorial to Dr. King, The King Center leads this global charge, offering education and training in Nonviolence365™ and creating space for people everywhere to engage, learn, and unite.

In 2026, we gather under the strategic theme: Mission Possible II: Building Community, Uniting a Nation the Nonviolent Way. This theme is more than a banner; it's a blueprint for action. It guides our programming, fuels our outreach, and anchors our commitment to building the Beloved Community; a world where injustice ends, violence is replaced by compassion, and love becomes the prevailing force.

Through dynamic events leading up to the King Holiday on January 19th, 2026, The King Center will spotlight both Dr. King's groundbreaking work and Mrs. Coretta Scott King's visionary leadership in institutionalizing his legacy. Together, they laid the foundation for a movement that continues to shape hearts, minds, and policies across the globe.

We invite you to be part of this journey. Stand with us. Learn with us. Build with us. Let's unite a nation… boldly, bravely, and the nonviolent way."

Click here to read more

National Day of Racial Healing - January 20

RACIAL HEALING

"On Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026, people across the country will join together to mark the 10th annual National Day of Racial Healing. Community voices inspired the first observance and scores of individuals and groups have continued that tradition by reflecting, connecting and imagining a brighter future for all of us.

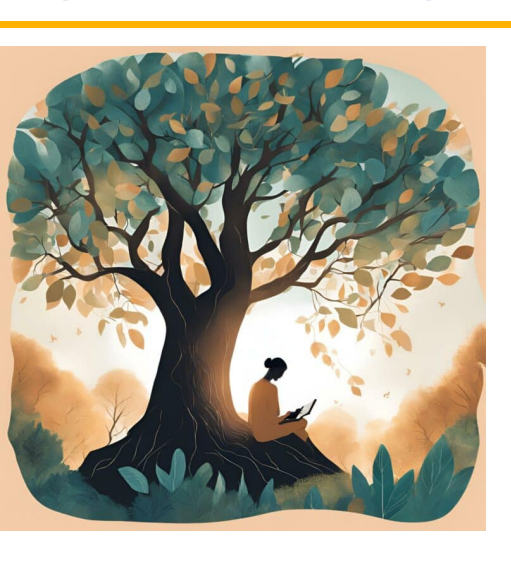
If you need ideas for organizing or hosting a community event, this guide will help you design an experience in which everyone feels a sense of belonging, from children and youth to parents and caregivers, educators and elders."

Click here to read more

FEBRUARY

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for February.

February is Black History Month

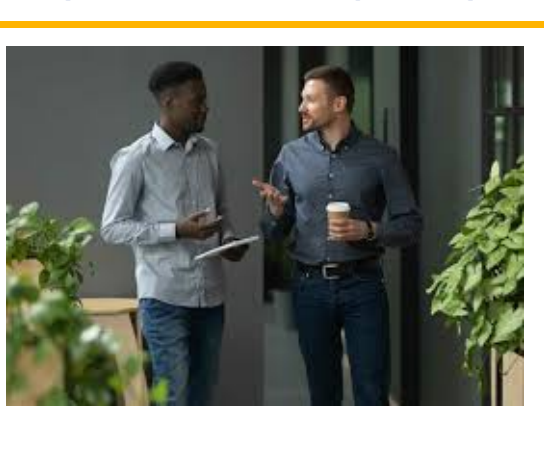


Celebrating Black History Month: Embracing Mental Health for Young Adults

"February is a time to recognize and celebrate Black History Month – a month dedicated to honoring the achievements, culture, and contributions of Black individuals and communities throughout history. As young adults, it's essential to understand not just the historical context but also how these narratives intersect with present-day issues, especially mental health."

Click here to learn more

February is Ethnic Equality Month



"Ethnic Equality Month is celebrated in February every year. It is a period to recognize the similarities all people have, yet acknowledge, appreciate and respect the differences in all of us. So no matter what race you are, or what ethnicity you belong to, everyone is equal and deserves equal rights and equal opportunities. Ethnic Equality Month is a good time to reflect and challenge ourselves, as a group and individually. It brings to light the unfortunate biases that still exist in our society, how far we've come in achieving equality, and what each of us can do to contribute to something the world should be striving to achieve; social equality and justice."

Click here to read more

World Interfaith Harmony Week - February 1-7

Uniting for Peace

"World Interfaith Harmony Week is an annual event observed during the first week of February, since the General Assembly designation in 2010. The General Assembly pointed out that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace and established World Interfaith Harmony Week as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith.

Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions to enhance mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people, the General Assembly encourages all States to spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship during that week, on a voluntary basis and according to their own religious traditions or convictions."

Click here to learn more

Random Acts of Kindness Week - February 14-20

"Are you a RAKtivist? The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation hopes so. The foundation has celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Day and Week every year since 1995, offering participants a variety of free resources. You can download a calendar for 2026 with great ideas for showing kindness throughout the year.

The underlying goal is to promote the life-changing potential contained in even a small act of kindness. You don't have to create a large-scale strategy to address a global problem — just look for someone within your circle of influence and do something to improve their day.

If you're the type of person who starts each new year with a plan to develop positive and healthy habits, then participating in Random Acts of Kindness Day and Week should be on your list!

It could give you a solid start in creating a behavior that offers enormous benefits to you and to others."

Click here to learn more

World Cancer Day - February 4

THE WORLD CANCER DAY THEME 2025-2027 "UNITED BY UNIQUE" PLACES PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF CARE AND THEIR STORIES AT THE HEART OF THE CONVERSATION.

Cancer is more than just a medical diagnosis — it's a deeply personal matter.

Behind every diagnosis lies a unique human story - stories of grief, pain, healing, resilience, love and more. That's why a people-centred approach to cancer care that fully integrates each individual's unique needs, with compassion and empathy, leads to the best health outcomes.

The campaign will explore different dimensions of people-centred cancer care and new ways of making a difference. It will offer a three- year journey from raising awareness to taking action.

Click here to learn more

Chinese/Lunar New Year 2026 - February 17th

"Chinese New Year 2026 is the Year of the Fire Horse gallops in with vibrant and fiery energy, symbolizing adventure, vitality, and momentum. Each year in the Chinese zodiac is associated with an animal sign. Horses are lively, charming, and adventurous. In the zodiac, they thrive in lively settings and are often seen as natural leaders and motivators. It is a time to embrace Chinese traditions, enjoy delicious food, and wish for prosperity and happiness in the year ahead."

Click here to learn more

Barriers and Beliefs: Understanding Mental Health in Asian Communities

"One University of Maryland study examined the mental health needs of young Asian American adults. Study participants were either born in India, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, or Vietnam or recently immigrated from those countries.

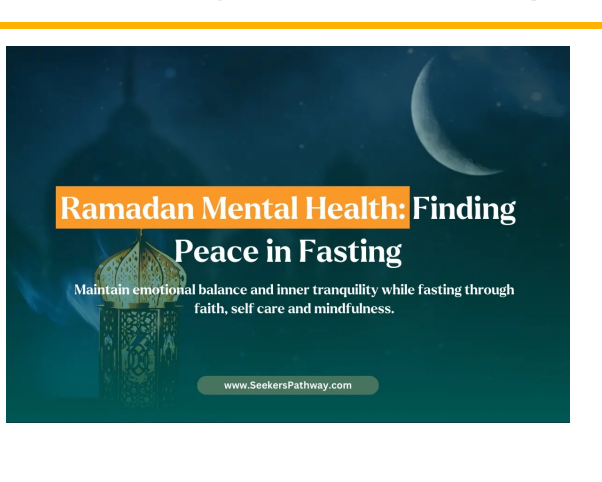
The researchers learned that these individuals faced a range of pressures and problems that discouraged them from seeking help for mental health concerns.

Some said they felt tremendous pressure to be academically or professionally successful. To stay focused, they ignored or denied symptoms. Others cited cultural concerns. They explained that mental health was a taboo topic in their communities.

Geoffrey Liu, MD, explains stigma in the community. "For some Asian Americans, there's a real sense that your value as a person depends on your ability to take care of your family and community.""

Click here to learn more

Ramadan Begins - February 17*



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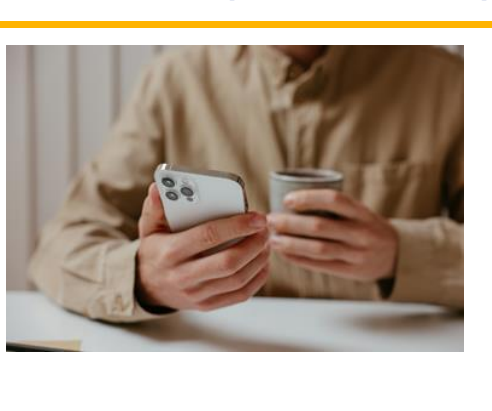
Click here to learn more

Ash Wednesday - February 18



I gave up tech for Lent, Here's how it helped my mental health

If you have ever struggled with your mental health, you may have mixed feelings about the oft-quoted verses from Philippians 4:6-7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Maybe you're raising your hands in praise at the citing of your anchor verse. Maybe you're rolling your eyes, knowing the pain of an out-of-context truth. Perhaps you're somewhere in between. I know I am.

On one hand, it is scripture - and therefore, in the words of theologian Greg Thompson, it is absolutely true and given because he loves us. I believe that. But on the other, in my totally honest experience, it doesn't always seem to work.

Click here to learn more

MARCH

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for March.

March is National Women's History Month

"During the month of March, we give a little extra attention to all of the amazing accomplishments of strong, determined women. Since 1987, the United States has formally recognized March as National Women's History Month. Every woman has a story to tell and gifts to share with the world. So get ready, because this month is about honoring magnificent ladies, and we are ready to celebrate it to the fullest. Celebrating this women's month by supporting women chase her dreams and fulfilling her educational needs by finding her right scholarships from around the world."

Learn More Here

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

UNDERSTAND
ALL HEART
DISABLE THE LABEL
LOVE AND CARE
NEVER GIVE UP!
DON'T DIS MY ABILITY

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Shines a Light on Mental Health

"For an individual living with a disability, it can be easy to focus on the physical challenges they face, resulting in mental and emotional needs falling by the wayside. If you or a loved one live with a disability, it's important to prioritize your mental and emotional health alongside your physical well-being. And for caretakers, valuing your mental and emotional health can keep you going and better able to care for your loved one."

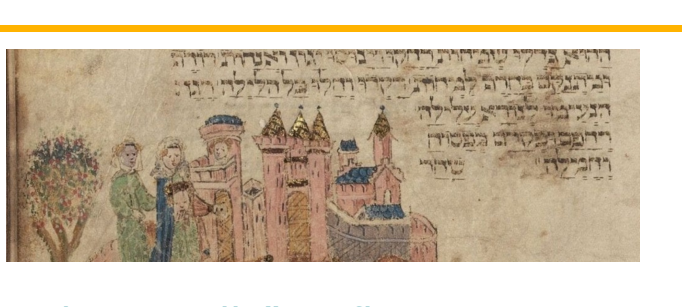
Click here to learn more

Self-injury Awareness Day - March 1

"Self-Injury Awareness Day (SIAD), is an international awareness day that takes place every year on March 1. This day is meant for learning about self-injury behaviors and for providing resources to those who are in need of help. An orange ribbon, representing a sign of hope for a misunderstood problem, symbolizes this day. Self-injury, also known as self-harm, is the deliberate action of causing physical harm to oneself and is a sign of emotional distress."

Click here to learn more

Purim - March 2*-3



Beyond the Palace Walls" Reflections on Mental Health for Purim

"At its core, Lent is about preparing ourselves for a deeper and fuller reception of Christ into our hearts. The Church encourages the practice of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as the primary methods of preparation. Ultimately, this culminates in the celebration of Holy Week, coming to fruition on Easter Sunday, when we receive and celebrate the Risen Lord. In many ways, this journey can be summed up as a movement from death to resurrection; by laying down our self-reliance ("dying to ourselves") and making room for our dependence on God, we can be transformed. Dropping down and making contact with our hunger for God is the first step towards a deeper connection with Him. This requires us to lower our defenses and acknowledge our vulnerability, often laying aside the things we use to shore ourselves up. This is the place where mental health enters the picture; it can be incredibly painful (and dangerous) to suddenly abandon coping strategies that are keeping us afloat. My hope is that this article can provide some guidance on how to participate in Lent while also making mental health a priority. If we are to give ourselves to God completely as we are, we must make room for our mental and emotional state."

Click here to learn more

Employee Appreciation Day - March 6

"Employee Appreciation Day, observed annually on the first Friday of March, is a prime opportunity for organizations to recognize and celebrate the dedication of their workforce. In 2025, National Employee Appreciation Day falls on March 7th, and it's the perfect occasion to boost morale and foster a positive workplace culture. By implementing thoughtful and impactful initiatives, like an employee relief fund, employers can show genuine gratitude while enhancing employee engagement."

Click here to learn more

World Bipolar Day - March 30

BIPOLAR
DISORDER

Photo by micheile henderson on Unsplash

Raising Awareness, Breaking Stigma, and Spreading Hope in the World Bipolar Day

Why It Matters

Bipolar disorder affects more than 40 million people worldwide, yet stigma, misinformation, and misunderstanding still surround it. World Bipolar Day is an opportunity to:

- Educate the public about the condition and its many faces.
- Encourage open dialogue about mental health.
- Support those living with bipolar disorder in feeling seen, heard, and understood."

"Every year on March 30, people around the globe recognize World Bipolar Day, a powerful moment to educate, advocate, and amplify the voices of those living with bipolar disorder. The date was chosen to honor the birthday of Vincent van Gogh, the legendary artist who is believed to have lived with bipolar disorder.

Click here to learn more

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

January

Month long themes

Mental Wellness Month

3 - International Mind-Body Wellness Day
6 - Epiphany
7 - Coptic Orthodox Christmas
13 - Korean American Day
14 - Orthodox New Year
16 - National Religious Freedom Day
18 - World Religion Day
19 - MLK Jr. Day
20 - National Day of Racial Healing
27 - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust

February

Month long themes

American Heart Month
Black History Month
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
Ethnic Equality Month

Week long themes

1-7 - World Interfaith Harmony Week
14-20 - Random Acts of Kindness Week
23-March 1 - National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

1 - National Freedom Day
2 - Eastern Orthodox Christian: The Presentation of Christ
4 - World Cancer Day
11 - International Day of Women and Girls in Science
14 - Valentines Day
15 - Parinirvana – Nirvana day
15 - Hindu: Maha Shivaratri. A Hindu festival celebrating Lord Shiva.
17 - Chinese New Year
17 - Random Acts of Kindness Day
17* - Ramadan begins
18 - Ash Wednesday

March

Month long themes

National Women's History Month
Ethnic Equality Month
Gender Equality Month
Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
Greek-American Heritage Month
Irish-American Heritage Month

Week long themes

8-14 - National Sleep Awareness Week
16-22 - Brain Awareness Week
16-20 - LGBTQ Health Awareness Week
22-28 - National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week

1 Self-injury Awareness Day
2*-3 - Purim
4 - Holi
4 – Sikh: Hola Mohalla
6 - Employee Appreciation Day
8 - International Women's Day
13 - World Sleep Day
15 - International Day to Combat Islamophobia
19*-20-Islamic: Eid al-Fitr
25 - Medal of Honor Day
30 - World Bipolar Day

Reminder: All holidays marked with * begin the prior evening.

Also consider the following calendars for other important dates:

2025 Interfaith Calendar

2025 Diversity Calendar

Mental Health Ministries, a program of Pathways to Promise, creates and promotes resources to help erase the stigma of mental health challenges in our faith communities. Join us in making a difference for those with mental health challenges and those who love and support them.

Click the button below to give a monthly gift of $30 (just $1 a day) or a one-time amount of $120 (which equals just $10 a month) or any amount you choose. You may also send a check to Pathways to Promise at the address below.

Thank you for joining us in supporting mental health needs!

Click here to give now

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